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THE Journal for all interested in
Country Life and Country Pursuits

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THE AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS ACT.

IT is as well to remember, when discussing the value of this Bill, that there are two sides to the question with which it professes to deal. Looked at from one point of view it is of the highest value to the tenant-farmer; from another, the landlord's point of view, it is obnoxious and unnecessary. Therefore, whether we approve or condemn the Bill, is all a matter of the way in which it is regarded. Let us examine its sides, and, first of all, that of the tenant. Very few honest people would be willing to assert nowadays that tenants were treated in an unconscionable manner by their landlords. Many years ago they were, undoubtedly, harassed and abused; restrictions in cropping, restrictions on selling off produce, eviction on political grounds—such were some of the vexatious conditions under which farming was carried on. Doubtless there are many leases still in force which contain the old unnecessary restrictions, but they are in the minority, and the new Bill will put an end to them. This is as it should be. Agricultural science has no more stood still than any other branch of knowledge, and therefore the old restrictive clauses in leases—inserted with a view to protect the holding against depreciation—have been rendered unnecessary owing to the discovery of other and cheaper methods of effecting the same object. Restrictions upon cropping are vexatious and unnecessary. Every tenant should be allowed to farm his land in his own way, provided he does not run it down. It is sometimes objected that if freedom of cropping were allowed the tenant would very quickly depreciate the fertility of his holding, and

then throw the land back, in a ruined condition, on his landlord's hands. Such an objection can only arise from ignorance. It would only be necessary to allow a tenant a four years' run to see how he managed his farm, and it would be quite impossible for him in that space of time to depreciate fatally its inherent fertility. He might, certainly, leave it in a dirty condition, but for this his landlord could obtain compensation.

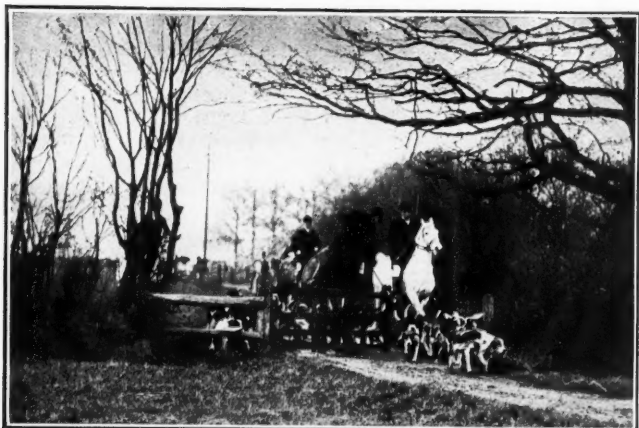
Another of the most fertile sources of grievance, from the tenant's point of view, arises out of the habit of game-rearing. The owner of a property chooses his home farm as near as possible to his house, which is often right in the centre of the estate, so that the game reared presently spreads afield, and radiates outward over the adjoining farms in search of food. Now there is no more reason why a man's pheasants should be allowed to trespass on his tenant's cornfields than his poultry. It is, of course, understood, when a farm is let, that game is reared close by; but it is equally understood that fox-hunting is indulged in in the neighbourhood, yet damage caused by foxes is generally a matter for compensation. If, then, compensation is allowed on account of damage caused by foxes, which are *feræ naturæ*, surely it is still more reasonable that it should be given on account of damage from game reared solely for the sport and amusement of the landlord. This is no socialistic doctrine: it is merely a matter of common honesty. Lastly, there is the question of compensation for unreasonable disturbance. This is, in fact, nothing more nor less than the introduction of "tenant right," call it what you will. It is probably the only really knotty point of the whole Bill. The case is put thus: It is unfair that a man should be allowed to sink money in his holding—money which it is necessary to lay out if his business is to be made productive—and then be forced to turn out at short notice and spend more money in moving his stock and household to a new place. It does seem hard, certainly, at first sight; but farming is no different in this particular to any other business. A shopkeeper in a town has no greater security, and may be turned out at the termination of his lease without compensation. Certainly the present Government has now brought in a Town Tenants' (Ireland) Bill, which will probably be eventually extended to England also, and, therefore, the principle of compensation may be universal in such cases in course of time. The worst feature of the clause is the danger and expense of litigation.

Now let us glance at the landlord's side of the question. His first and greatest objection to the changes introduced under the new Bill is that his inherent right of free contract is affected. He is bound to have his land cultivated, and, therefore, to take a substantial tenant who offers himself. If, however, the tenant subsequently renders himself obnoxious, owing to his views of the game laws, or some other usually valid reason, the owner cannot get rid of him without paying him to move on. Surely this is stretching a point. My neighbour may like music, I may not, yet I can ask a barrel-organ man to move on who plants himself outside my house. Opinions differ, and upon no subject will differences of opinion more surely arise than that of what constitutes "unreasonable" disturbance. Arbitration may be allowed to settle the matter in each case; but, unfortunately, the arbitrators are themselves human, and here again the maxim will prevail, *quod homines, tot sententiæ*, and there will be no certitude as to the result. Then, again, the owner complains that his tenant will be allowed to erect expensive buildings, and generally to alter the condition of his holding, without reference to his landlord's feelings on the subject. He may, in fact, take a grass farm intended solely for the rearing of stock and promptly turn it into a fattening establishment, to which he considers it necessary to add a slaughter-house. There are many forms of variation which may be devised in the original nature of the holding, the majority of which can only be looked upon as injuriously affecting the landlord's property. For these, he will be asked to pay. In relation to this matter there is one point which does not seem to have received sufficient, if any, attention. The new Bill gives the tenant the right to alter the condition of his holding, to lay down land to grass and generally to farm in his own way. Does it also allow him to plough up old pasture? This is a most momentous question, for although he could hardly seriously depreciate the value of his holding in a few years in any other way, he might almost contrive to ruin his landlord by taking this course.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of Miss Sylvia Grenfell. Miss Grenfell is a daughter of Captain and the Hon. Mrs. Charles Grenfell, and a grand-daughter of the late Lord Hillingdon.

* * It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens, or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.



COUNTRY NOTES

IN the discussion on Small Holdings at the Economic Congress, the most practical point raised was the choice between ownership and tenancy. Mr. J. L. Green, who is strongly in favour of the Bill drawn up by Mr. Jesse Collings, vigorously supported the former; but as far as we can see expert opinion is in favour of the latter. The prime object of any Small Holdings Bill must be to allow the industrious labourer, whose capital is very small indeed, to get upon the land. No doubt if he had the requisite funds he would be in a more favourable position as owner than as tenant, but what he has to consider is how to obtain the greatest possible return from the very small amount of money at his disposal; and to him the prospect of becoming owner of a piece of soil by a long-protracted series of annual payments is not at all attractive. It means that the best of his days will have to be given to working off the debt. On a small tenancy, too, he has the knowledge that if he should succeed he will be easily able to mount to a larger one. Strongest of all is the argument drawn from experience. Peasants have shown no eagerness to take advantage of the Small Holdings Act of Mr. Chaplin; but the various schemes set before us by Lord Carrington, Lord Harrowby and others whereby they can hire land on advantageous terms have been taken advantage of with the utmost avidity. We do not very well see how Mr. Jesse Collings and Mr. Green can get over this fact.

The obituary for last week contains the names of two men illustrious in the educational world. One is that of the Very Rev. Robert Herbert Story, D.D., Principal of Glasgow University. When Mr. Asquith went to Glasgow on the previous Thursday for his installation as Lord Rector, he was Mr. Story's guest, but the principal was too ill to receive him, and he died on Sunday morning. Dr. Story was a son of the Manse, his father having been for more than forty years minister of the parish of Roseneath at the mouth of the Gareloch. It was a district renowned for theological controversy, as on the other side of the Gareloch lived John Macleod Campbell, the minister of Row, who was deposed for holding certain views about the Atonement. Story was a great Minister, a great Professor and a distinguished member of the University. He was a good preacher and a keen controversialist, who early in life took a prominent position in the discussions of the General Assembly.

The other great educationalist whose death was announced last Saturday was the Rev. William Haig-Brown, LL.D., Master of the Charterhouse, who died at the advanced age of eighty-three. His career was that of a typical English scholar. His education was begun at Christ's Hospital, whence he proceeded to Pembroke College, Cambridge. He was ordained in 1852, and remained at Pembroke as Fellow, Tutor and Dean from 1849 to 1857, in which year he married and was appointed Head-master of Kensington School. He was Head-master of Charterhouse from 1863 to 1897, when he succeeded Canon Elwyn as Master. His name will always be associated with the removal of Charterhouse School from London to Godalming, a scheme which he carried out in the teeth of much resistance. Dr. Haig-Brown was an ideal schoolmaster, and is said to have known personally every one of his 560 boys, his friendship with them being facilitated by his kindly disposition and a fine sense of humour.

An American writer, who happens also to be chief statistician of the United States Census Bureau, waxes quite lyrical over the extraordinary manner in which wealth is multiplied in the United States. "Every time the sun makes its daily course," he says, "it finds this nation £2,000,000 richer than when its last rays lingered at the golden gates of California, than when they lighted up the granite hills of Maine." This is not quite the style of language in which our statisticians, such, for example, as Sir Robert Giffen, Lord Avebury or Mr. Goschen, would indulge, but it, nevertheless, conveys an extraordinary fact. Mr. L. G. Powers, the statistician in question, has shown that if the figures in "Mulhall's Dictionary of Statistics" are approximately correct, then the wealth of the United States at the present moment is equal to that of Great Britain and Russia combined. The class list of the chief European nations arranged in point of wealth reads: France, Germany, Russia, Austria, Italy, Spain, Belgium and the Danubian States. But it is impossible that they can increase in riches at the same rate as the United States, since most of them possess no wildernesses out of which farms can be carved, no trackless prairies to be opened up by railroads, and comparatively few resources that have not yet been developed.

It need cause no wonder that on the Continent at the present moment there is a growing feeling of dissatisfaction at the harbourage which London affords to Anarchists. The old boast that every man was free who stepped on our shores is all very well in its way; but at times, when the enemies of society are every day perpetrating the most atrocious outrages, it is an abuse of freedom to offer the hospitality of our shores to all who seek it. Many of the aliens who land here belong to the very lowest classes. Some, as we have been informed, have no better testimonial of their respectability to offer than a certificate of gaol clearance. These pests form a plague spot on our great towns, especially London, and there is only too much truth in the reproach levelled at them by a German paper, that the schemes of the Nihilist and Anarchist are very often projected from London. This state of things calls urgently for the intervention of the Government.

MIDDAY.

The iron tongues repeat the hour
And slave-like answer one by one,
From church and 'change and mart and tower
Discordantly they jangle on
Until their task is done.
O Time, upon the silent hills,
Thou broodest imperturbably;
Man's fetters and his iron mills
Grinding the hours are not for thee,
But thou art still and free!
Thou breathest there of what the world
Was, e'er the clanging cities rose,
And shall be, when at last unfurled
The peunon-flame of doom shall close
The tale of human woes.

H. RAPHOE.

One satisfactory result of the Book War, of which we are all becoming so tired, is that a firm of publishers, Messrs. Chatto and Windus, who have long been renowned for the number of novels they publish, have resolved to issue their romances at 2s. 6d. instead of 6s. A movement of this kind is sure to be contagious. When one or two firms began to do away with the old three-volume novel that was so much in favour in the mid-Victorian age, the others had to follow suit, and the three-decker passed into desuetude. So, probably, it will be with the 6s. novel. When people can get their fiction for 2s. 6d. they will not pay double the price for it. How this will affect the authors it is somewhat difficult to determine. Obviously, the publishers, in order to make the business of selling books at a cheaper rate remunerative, must deal in larger quantities, that is to say, advertise very freely and prepare to sell big editions. But, probably, on the whole authors will suffer. There are very few of them who under the 6s. régime obtained the prices that were paid George Eliot and Lord Beaconsfield, to take two well-known examples, and there will be still less plunder for them when their royalties are calculated on 2s. 6d. books.

We are glad to observe that the resurrection of the movement in favour of the construction of the Channel Tunnel shows signs of growing futility. It seems to have originated in the minds of engineers and others who looked at nothing except the work of construction. Naturally it received a considerable amount of support from those who are commercially interested in flooding Great Britain with cheap fruit and other produce from the Continent. But it required no great amount of reflection to bring the nation to the view expressed by Von Moltke to Lord Ampthill that Great Britain would ever have reason to regret it if in a moment of aberration she sanctioned

this work. It would change our position at once from being the greatest Sea Power in the world to that of one of the military States on the Continent. There would be a constant danger of the command of the tunnel being lost by treachery, want of promptitude, or any momentary neglect of the usual precautions. Compared with all this, the advantages to be gained are extremely slight.

In the course of his evidence before the Commission of the Feeble-minded, Mr. Davey of the Local Government Board made a number of statements that show the necessity for curtailing the extravagance of our public bodies. He mentioned an asylum in Sussex where the cost of accommodating pigs worked out at £50 a pig, and where there was a separate mortuary for males and females. The provision of theatres, tennis courts, etc., in asylums was another of his instances of unnecessary expenditure, and their absurdity becomes manifest when we remember that so many of the lunatics are paupers suffering from senile decay, and therefore totally unable to take any pleasure whatever in scenic representations. For every lunatic in asylums in 1889-90 the debt for asylum accommodation amounted to £67, and this in 1904 had risen to £111. Mr. Davey looks on the 4s. grant to Boards of Guardians as on the whole mischievous. So far from its having brought any relief to the rates, it had resulted in actual loss to the ratepayers, and it led to the asylums becoming filled up with patients who might be treated in a cheaper form of building. The system was much better under which a harmless old man in his dotage was taken care of simply in the workhouse. It is the chronic cases in the asylums to which the increase of expenditure is mainly due.

Professor Elie Metchnikoff in his studies of natural death has returned to his favourite subject. He is not at all a believer in people wishing for death as long as health is maintained, and his investigations have led him to believe that the age at which people usually die in these times is not that of natural death. After interviewing many old and feeble people in hospitals and elsewhere, he found that even in the most aged welcome was given to the slightest glimmer of hope that their lives might be prolonged. His argument is that the natural life of a man is probably about 150 years, and that if proper care were taken it could be kept up to this point. He believes that death is usually caused by the presence in the blood of certain narcotic poisons produced by exertion, and he lives in the hope of discovering an antidote of which an injection into the blood would prevent fatigue. It may be, of course, that M. Metchnikoff is only dreaming a dream, but it must be admitted that the discoveries he has made in trying to realise it are of incalculable value to the race.

At the moment of writing it appears that the sum required for the purchase of the picturesque Purley Beeches near Sanderstead, comprising an area of 13½ acres, is still short of completion by some £350. The amount is small, but the days of grace to which the option of purchase of this beautiful spot for the nation extends are running out very quickly, seeing that they expire on the twenty-second of the month. It is more than possible that before these words are read the money will have been subscribed, but if this should not be the case it is greatly to be hoped that the relatively small sum needed to make up the required total of £1,400 will be forthcoming within the next few days. It would be a thousand pities if this "most eligible site" should fall into the hands of the speculative builder. Subscriptions in aid of its purchase for the nation may be sent to the hon. secretary of the Purley Beeches Purchase Committee, Captain Carpenter, R.N., the Red House, Sanderstead, Surrey.

It is curious to see how such sudden and extensive weather changes as those which we suffered about the date of Christmas and the New Year affect the distribution of the birds for the time being. Land birds, especially those which are immigrant in winter, such as fieldfares, redwings, woodcocks and so on, seem always to go westward in a heavy fall of snow in the East of England. It is a perfectly wise instinct which impels them in that direction, an instinct probably inherited from a long line of ancestors who have found victory in the struggle for existence by going westward when the snow comes to the Eastern Counties. It is remarkable, too, how immediately a large number of them return to the East on the first signs of a thaw which will disperse the snow. Besides this the snow, with its tendency to obliterate landmarks, seems to delude birds and cause them to lose their way, and when, as happened this year, a sudden thaw succeeds a heavy snowfall, the flood which follows is, as always, a great disturber of birds and animals from their haunts. It happened to the present writer to find a dabchick the day after all the snow had gone in a small upland pond at least two miles from the nearest water which could have been its normal habitat. It must, probably, have followed up a flooded ditch and so found its way to this aquatic home, which was absurdly small for its diving exploits. After a flood kingfishers, too, are often to be found in the least likely places.

It is more than likely that by this time the freezing up of the Newfoundland Coasts will have put an end for the moment to any new occasions of dispute and friction over the *modus vivendi* and the Bait Act; but in the meanwhile further trouble, such as we have known in our own fishing history, is cropping up over the operations of the French steam trawlers in the neighbourhood of Halifax. It is the old story—the trawlers are accused of spoiling the local coast fishing. The evidence as to the extent to which, if to any, they actually do interfere with the local fisheries in our own waters is conflicting. At all events, as it would seem, what is not at all doubtful is the heat of feeling which the subject is arousing. The chief practical result at present has been the appointment of a committee to "memorialise" the Canadian Government to make representations on the subject to the Government here. With all these troublous fishery questions it seems as if the rigorous Canadian winter, which stays the fishing for a while, were really a blessing in disguise.

PEACOCK.

(ONCE A WELL-KNOWN STEEPLE-CHASER, NOW A CAB-HORSE.)

Broken racer, thin and old,
Trembling on thy tired feet,
Standing shivering a-cold
In the grey unlovely street:
Art thou thinking of the days
When, a youngster, blithe and free,
Thou wast in the meadow ways,
And the world was new to thee?
Or of that more stirring time
When, a grown and gallant horse,
Thou wast in the golden prime
Of thy fiery strength and force?
Warmly housed and richly fed,
One of Fortune's favoured names,
Round the thronging paddock led,
'Mid the fickle crowd's acclaims.
Hark! a cry like that of Fate,
Heard above a thousand din:
"Peacock leads into the straight!
Evens Peacock! Peacock wins!"
Now along the stony street,
Hurried, goaded to and fro;
Through the driving rain and sleet,
Old and failing thou must go.
Thus doth fickle Fortune use
Those who once her favourites were,
Thus do we our friendships lose
When adversity is here.
Would that we could bear their loss
With as brave a heart as thou,
With thy patience, gallant horse,
Honoured once, forsaken now.

R. G. T. COVENTRY.

Although the official announcement of Mr. Birrell's transference from the Board of Education to the Irish Office has not yet been published, there seems to be no doubt that the appointment has been made, and that it merely waits the sanction of the King. The point which has most interested the public in the discussion of Mr. Birrell's selection is that he should be willing, after the tempestuous debates on the Education Bill, lasting in both Houses of Parliament for the better part of a year, to undertake the even more arduous conflict entailed by the policy of Irish administration. If the truth were known of the Cabinet considerations which had induced Mr. Birrell's colleagues to select the late Minister for Education as the best-fitted member of the Government for the work of the Irish Office this year, the selection would be justified on two grounds, apart altogether from political preconception either on the side of one party or the other. In dealing with the tangled skein of the education controversy Mr. Birrell, without any previous official experience, won the esteem of all his opponents by the courteous and liberal-minded tolerance of his views and by his scrupulous desire to be fair. His patience, good humour and the rich literary flavour of all his speeches established his reputation securely as being one of the best recruits of the new Liberalism.

Mr. Birrell has therefore been chosen by the Government in all probability because he is the Minister most likely to minimise hostile conflict with the Irish Nationalists. The other reason for his selection doubtless is the foreshadowed intention of the Government to bring forward at the opening of Parliament next month a new scheme of "Devolution" in Irish local government. Mr. Birrell is not so deeply pledged as some of his colleagues to the far-reaching Home Rule scheme of Mr. Gladstone's day; and possibly it is part of the reckoning that Mr. Birrell's success in a fresh office will in the end redound to the collective administrative reputation of His Majesty's Ministers.

BEAR-SHOOTING IN KAMCHATKA.



TYPICAL BEAR GROUND; EARLY SPRING.

[For the benefit of those among our readers who are interested in travel and sport we have pleasure in stating that Captain C. E. Radclyffe, who has contributed to our pages since the commencement of COUNTRY LIFE, and who has recently returned from a long trip in the Arctic regions of Asia and America, has consented to embody the narrative of his trip in a series of short articles, of which the following is the first.—ED.]

IN these days when the rapid march of civilisation is fast leaving traces of man's handiwork in remote corners of the globe, it is hard indeed to find a country such as exists in Kamchatka and along the shores of North-East Siberia. Here, in fact, railways or telegraph lines, and even roads, are things unknown to the sparse population scattered along these desolate coasts. To-day this country can lay claim to being one of the greatest paradises for sportsmen which still remain on earth. It is true that an undertaking of anything like a complete tour along the western shores of the North Pacific and Bering Sea is one attended by a certain amount of hardships and considerable expense. Neither of these items, however, acts as a great deterrent upon the movements of many travellers who now roam in search of sport.

Now it is chiefly through information supplied by our friends that many of us are enabled to make certain successful trips after big game. And the writer is one who believes in a general free-masonry among fellow-sportsmen, but has no sympathy with the selfish theory of keeping every good thing to himself. Therefore he will attempt in this and a few subsequent articles to describe briefly the *modus operandi* when in quest of sport in these Northern climes. His object will have been achieved if these lines prove useful or interesting to any of his brethren, the big-game-shooters, who may chance to read them.

During the first week of May, 1906, I found myself, in partnership with a well-known German sportsman, awaiting the arrival of a steamer at Hakodate on the Island

of Yezo in Northern Japan. This ship was in size a matter of some 450 tons, and was engaged in trading along the coasts of Kamchatka. We had arranged a part charter of the vessel with her owners, so that she might be at our disposal when required. Our primary object was to spend some two months in Kamchatka, and then to proceed north along the coasts of North-East Siberia as far as the Arctic Ocean, then across the Bering Straits and down along the shores of Alaska and British Columbia, finally returning home over the same route which we had travelled in the spring, across the American Continent. All of this was successfully accomplished. But it may be stated *en passant* that a much shorter way of reaching Kamchatka would be *via* the Trans-Siberian Railway to Vladivostock. The country on that route, however, was at that time so upset from the effects of the recent war with Japan as to render it dangerous and almost impossible to traverse.

In early spring, owing to the icebound nature of the Northern Japanese Coasts and the Kurile Islands, ships bound for Kamchatka are obliged to wait until the ice recedes northwards. This usually happens early in May. Such was the case with our expedition, and a matter of ten days was occupied in the voyage from Hakodate to Petropavlovsk, which is the principal settlement in Kamchatka. During this voyage we encountered some of the most terrific gales it has ever been my misfortune to witness. On arrival at Petropavlovsk we were received and entertained hospitably by the Russian Governor of Kamchatka.

A few hours' delay found us supplied with two good Russian hunters, and once more we steamed North to a spot called Bechevinsky Bay, which lies some fifty miles north-west of Petropavlovsk. Here we bade farewell for two months to the steamer, and set out in two small boats. Our party consisted of my friend and self, with one servant, a professional taxidermist from Europe, and the two Russians—not



JUST LANDED; CAMP ON THE SHORE.



PEGGING OUT BEAR SKINS TO DRY.

a large staff for one or two men accustomed to shooting in India or Africa, but sufficient for our purpose. Bears being our first quest, we immediately devoted our attention to them. The actual hunting was absurdly easy, since seldom a day passed without one or more being seen, even from camp, by various members of our party. In fact, the men on landing, and before pitching camp, encountered two large bears, and we then shot four more in our first two days' shooting. At this period of the year snow lies deep on the ground and extends down to the seashore. Nothing meets the eye save an endless expanse of snow-clad hills or valleys, and little does the spectator imagine, if he be a stranger to the land, that beneath the snow lie countless acres of dense alder, birch and dwarf pine brushwood. When first the bears emerge from winter quarters they make their way straight to the seashore. There they may be seen prowling about like scavenger dogs, eating seaweed, dead fish or other things cast up by the tide. The method of hunting for them then is the simple and luxurious style of being rowed quietly in a boat along the shores

course of time the scientific American mammalogists, who delight in such matters, will discover some differences in the



THE RUSSIAN GOVERNOR AND CHUKICHI NATIVES ON ANADYR RIVER.



THE HUNTERS' CAMP.

of numerous bays, and scanning the hill-sides, or seashore, with eyes and glasses. So plentiful are bears that the hunter will often amuse himself by watching the antics of many, only having recourse to his rifle when one rather larger than usual is seen.

Plenty of warm clothing or blankets must be provided for shooting in Kamchatka during early spring. Personally, the writer is one of those fortunate individuals on whom cold has little or no effect. This is an invaluable attribute during such a trip as this one was, when our small boats were wrecked in the surf on more than one occasion, and their occupants were compelled *faute de mieux* to swim ashore. These Kamchatkan bears are usually classified under the general family name of *Ursus arctus collaris*, and although there are undoubtedly many varieties, as regards size and colour of their skins, yet I think we may safely assume that all bears found between Cape Lopatka, the southernmost point of Kamchatka, and the Anadyr River in North-East Siberia are all of one type. Probably in due

dentition or cranial peculiarities of bears from certain districts along these shores. Consequently, we may ere long expect to see a number of so-called new species classified on the Western Coasts of the Bering Sea. In shape, colour and general appearance the Kamchatkan bears closely resemble their immediate neighbouring species, the brown bears of Alaska. But the latter are far the largest, although on this trip we killed certain bears in Kamchatka which had skulls almost as big as those of the gigantic *Ursus dalli gyas* which I formerly shot in Alaska. These bears are also similar to the Alaskan species as regards their habits of hibernating and commencing in early spring to feed on seaweed, grass, or herbs. Also, when salmon begin to run into the countless rivers and lakes on the coast, the bears turn their attention to fishing operations. Consequently, the hunter should early in the season frequent the seashore and, later on, the vicinities of rivers or lakes where the salmon are known to run. How thick bears are in certain districts when salmon are running, the following example will show. One evening we

arrived in a small bay, at the head of which a river flowed into the sea. This river issued from a lake situated about half a mile from the shore. We camped on the shore, and ere the tents were pitched we saw seven bears feeding on a hillside close to our camp, and all on an area of less than 100 acres in extent. They were allowed to remain in possession of that spot until the following morning, when my friend and I sallied forth to attack the hill. The result was that in four days we bagged seven bears on this one hillside and saw many others.

The Kamchatkan bears, like all of their allied species, are cowards by nature, and will not attack a human being if unmolested. Neither did we come across an instance when a wounded animal really showed fight. One adventure, however, with a bear in that country was rather unusual, and therefore worthy of record. One evening, while coasting along the shores of a bay, we espied two bears feeding on a cliff about 600ft. above the shore. Rowing to land, we hauled the boat ashore and proceeded to climb after the bears. On nearing the spot where we had first seen them I observed one making off across a snow-slide, and promptly bowled him over. The bullet was badly placed, and hit him in the hind-quarters. He rolled down the snow-slide on to the beach, and immediately plunging into the sea, started to swim across the bay, which was here over a mile wide. Adopting similar tactics to those of bruin, the Russian hunter and myself quickly slid down some 500ft. to the beach and hastily pushed off the boat in hot pursuit of the bear, which was then some distance from the shore. In our haste we started with only one oar; but nothing daunted, the Russian, by using it over the stern, propelled the boat well enough, in a manner similar to that adopted by Japanese boatmen in their sampans. We rapidly overhauled the bear, which was swimming strongly, with only his head above water. Wishing to make sure of killing him and of reaching his body quickly, lest it should sink when dead, I remained standing in the bows of the boat until within 20yds. of the beast, and then fired at his head. But owing to the novel conditions, such as the boat's motion caused by the waves

and the exertions of my boatman, I made a clean miss and fell forward across the bows of the boat. Immediately on hearing my shot the bear turned and swam straight for the boat. The Russian was powerless to stop our impetus with his one oar, and consequently in a few seconds the boat and bear met. The beast took hold of the boat's side in his teeth, and no doubt in another moment would have capsized our small craft. Fortunately, I had been enabled to reload my rifle, and somehow managed to shove the barrel against the brute's nose and shoot him through the brain. Before his death struggles had ceased, we managed to rig up a slip noose in the end of a boat rope, and with this lassoed the bear's neck. By this means, after considerable exertions, we towed the carcass ashore and skinned it.

During two months spent in Kamchatka no less than ninety-three bears were seen at different times by my friend and myself. Of these we shot twenty, and could undoubtedly have bagged several others had we wished to shoot many more small ones than we did. In early spring, owing to the snow, it is hard to lose a wounded bear. But this disappears very rapidly, and is replaced by dense masses of brushwood, which, once relieved of the weight of snow, spring upright, and break into foliage with a

rapidity which astonishes those who are unacquainted with the peculiarities of spring and summer in Northern climes. Then, indeed, arises the difficulty of finding game, or tracking it when wounded, and momentary glimpses of bears crossing an open glade in June or July are responsible for the wounding and subsequent loss of many an animal. The density of brushwood in certain parts of Kamchatka is heart-breaking to the hunter when pushing his way through miles of it in quest of



A GOOD KAMCHATKAN BEAR.

game, and the metamorphosis in the appearance of the country between early spring and summer is bewildering. On the same spots where we had shot bears in May, without a twig in sight, and where a mouse could easily have been seen on the snow, I have struggled two months later, endeavouring to fight my way through impenetrable brush in which the largest bear is securely hidden from view.

C. E. RADCLIFFE.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

JOHN EVELYN is one of those characters particularly interesting to all who are concerned with country life. Although his diary extends over sixty years of the most troublous times in English history—"an age of extraordinary events and revolutions," to quote from his tombstone—he lived for the most part a retired and cultivated life, attending to his estate and dividing his leisure between good works and mental improvement. His diary is a valuable historical document, and we are glad to welcome the entirely satisfactory edition which has been edited by Mr. Austin Dobson and published by Messrs. Macmillan and Co. Its interest is not, like that of Pepys, one of self-revelation. The well-bred reticence which was one of his characteristics in public was carried to the study also, and although he never meant this diary for the general eye, he notes the events of his times and the brilliant, illustrious characters with whom he came into contact gravely and impersonally. He is always curious to know, and yet seldom dives into those poignant things of the heart that to other diaries have imparted the passion of poetry. His life was one of singular goodness and purity, and in the pages of the diary we find nothing that is out of harmony with the impression he made on his neighbours. The story it unfolds, however, gives us a valuable picture of the life of the gentleman of his time, the period in question extending, roughly speaking, from the execution of Strafford to the early days of Queen Anne's reign. He travelled because in those days travelling was part of the education of a gentleman. Before he was twenty-one he had visited Rotterdam and Antwerp, and by his twenty-first birthday he was back again at Wotton. On December 15th, 1641,

he was elected one of the Comptrollers of the Middle Temple-revellers, who, we are informed, kept Christmas that year "with great solemnity." He being desirous to pass it in the country, however, got leave to resign his staff of office and went with his brother Richard to Wotton. Afterwards he returned to London, where he stayed until March 5th, "studying a little, but dancing and fooling more."

On November 12th, 1642, we get a hint of the stirring events of the time in his reference to the battle of Brentford, when "I came in with my horse and arms just at the retreat." Already we find him developing a great interest in gardens, as on March 11th, 1643, he is at Hatfield admiring the garden and vineyard, "rarely well watered and planted." Two years before Pepys had been at the same place admiring the flowers and the "great gooseberries as big as nutmegs." His wish to join the King's forces was thwarted, and he returned to Wotton, where he devoted his energies to building a study, digging a fish-pond, contriving an island and "some other solitudes and retirements," thus laying the foundation of "those water-works and gardens which afterwards succeeded them, and became at that time the most famous of England." But the age was not favourable for the study of horticulture, and so Evelyn sent his "black manège" horse and furniture to Charles at Oxford, and, obtaining His Majesty's licence to travel again, went by post to Dover and so to Calais, visiting Paris and admiring its beauties, afterwards going alone on a "grand tour." From this he returned in March, 1646, in company with Edmund Waller, the poet, a Mr. Abdy and a Captain Wray, described as "a

good drinking gentleman." Mr. Austin Dobson describes so adequately the characteristics developed by Evelyn in his wanderings, characteristics which were typical of the time in which he lived, that we cannot do better than quote the passage, although the extract is rather a long one:

For scenery and landscape, except when conventionally clipped and combed, he really cares but little. Mountains to him are terrifying objects, only to be qualified by highly Latinised adjectives. He must always be remembered as the traveller who found but "hideous rocks" and "gloomy precipices" in the Forest of Fontainebleau—the traveller to whom the Alps seemed no more than the piled-up sweepings of the Plain of Lombardy. Had he lived in Waverley's day, it is obvious that he would have preferred the grotesque bears and pleached evergreens of Tully-veolan to the wildest passes in the realm of Vich Ian Vohr. But let him come across a "trim garden" and his style expands like a sunflower. He is "extraordinarily delighted" with its geometric formalities, its topiary ingenuities, its artless surprises. He rejoices in the "artificial echo" which, when "some fair nymph sings to its grateful returns," redoubles her canorous notes; in the "spinning basilisk" that flings a jetto fifty feet high at the bidding of the fountaineer; in the "extravagant musketeers" who deluge the passing stranger with streams from their carbines; in that "agreeable cheat" of the painted Arch of Constantine at Rueil against which birds dash themselves to death in the attempt to fly through. He is "infinitely taken" with the innumerable pet tortoises of Gaston of Orleans; with the still fish-ponds and their secular carp; with the "apiaries" and "volaries" and "rupellary nidaries" (for water-fowl); with all the endless "labyrinths" and "cryptas" and "perspectives," the avenues and parterres and cascades and terraces, which the genius of André le Nôtre had contrived to match the architecture of Mansard.

This is very curious, as showing that taste in garden and landscape is very much a fashion of the time. We have been taught by a hundred teachers to recognise the majesty of mountain and sea, to recognise even a beauty of its own in the dismal swamp and the low-level plain, to take for our models in the grouping and arrangement of flowers the wild way in which Nature scatters her own colours, massing poppies, daisies and roses so as to produce predominant hues. But this was long after Evelyn had taught delight in the formal. His garden is full of inventions and ingenuities. That he had plenty of sympathy with true art is proved, if by nothing else, by the well-known incident related of Grinling Gibbons. His meeting with the artist is in itself a beautiful illustration of his character:

This day, I first acquainted his Majesty with that incomparable young man, Gibbons, whom I had lately met with in an obscure place by mere

accident, as I was walking near a poor solitary thatched house, in a field in our parish, near Sayes Court. I found him shut in; but looking in at the window, I perceived him carving that large cartoon, or crucifix, of Tintoretto, a copy of which I had myself brought from Venice, where the original painting remains. I asked if I might enter; he opened the door civilly to me, and I saw him about such a work as for the curiosity of handling, drawing and studious exactness, I never had before seen in all my travels. I questioned him why he worked in such an obscure and lonesome place; he told me it was that he might apply himself to his profession without interruption, and wondered not a little how I found him out. I asked if he was unwilling to be made known to some great man, for that I believed it might turn to his profit; he answered, he was yet but a beginner, but would not be sorry to sell off that piece; on demanding the price, he said £100.

Later on, on March 1st, 1671:

I caused Mr. Gibbons to bring to Whitehall his excellent piece of carving, where being come, I advertised his Majesty, who asked me where it was; I told him in Sir Richard Browne's (my father-in-law) chamber, and that if it pleased his Majesty to appoint whither it should be brought, being large and though of wood heavy, I would take care for it. "No," says the King, "show me the way, I'll go to Sir Richard's chamber," which he immediately did, walking along the entries after me, as far as the Ewry, till he came up into the room, where I also lay. No sooner was he entered and cast his eye on the work, but he was astonished at the curiosity of it; and having considered it a long time, and discoursed with Mr. Gibbons, whom I brought to kiss his hand, he commanded it should be immediately carried to the Queen's side to show her.

The contempt with which the end of the incident is described is both characteristic and amusing:

When his Majesty was gone, a French peddling woman, one Madame de Boord, who used to bring petticoats and fans, and baubles out of France to the ladies, began to find fault with several things in the work, which she understood no more than an ass, or a monkey, so as in a kind of indignation, I caused the person who brought it to carry it back to the chamber, finding the Queen so much governed by an ignorant Frenchwoman, and this incomparable artist had his labour only for his pains, which not a little displeased me.

Among the many publications of Evelyn the one that stands out as the most valuable is his "Sylva." Its origin lay in a number of enquiries put to the Royal Society by the Commissioners of the Navy, who were apprehensive lest the supply of timber for ship-building should run short. But none of his writings approached the diary, which he never intended for publication, and which has merit that came to it unconsciously on the part of the author.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

AN OLD-FASHIONED SCOTCH WINTER.

DURING the past fortnight we have been experiencing a snow-storm which, by common consent, is held to be the worst since 1881. After several days of hard frost the storm began on Christmas Eve. In the early part of the day the snow was soft, but in the afternoon the wind veered to the north-west, and heavy snow showers fell for a couple of hours. Christmas Day was ideal—a hard frost and about an inch of dry powdery snow, which in sheltered spots had formed into miniature wreaths. This was the state of matters when a friend and I motored from Strathdon to Deeside, intending to return next morning. When we attempted to start the car next day, however, everything was found to be frozen hard as iron, and by the time it was thawed a tremendous blizzard had come on, which raged for forty-eight hours without cessation, blocking roads and railways. From December 27th till December 29th Aberdeenshire was completely isolated, and not a single newspaper or telegram came through till 11 p.m. on the night of the 29th. The average depth of snow was about 2ft., while some of the depths in the railway cuttings were from 15ft. to 20ft. in depth. Telegraph wires were everywhere broken, which is not to be wondered at when at several points I have seen quite 2in. of snow sticking to them. In some cases the birch trees had such an immense weight of snow on their branches that their tops were actually touching the ground, and numbers have been broken in this way.

Naturally the great storm has told severely on the birds, as the snow was of such a depth as to completely cover all vegetation. The rooks especially have had a very hard time of it, and some have grown so weak that they can scarcely walk. The partridges, too, are becoming very tame, and at one house that I know of are coming up to the windows for food. All the smaller birds are growing amazingly confiding, and we have two robins which constantly enter the house and fly on to the table while breakfast is going on, showing no signs of fear, but actually fighting for possession of a choice morsel. The robins and blackbirds every day display more and more dexterity in hanging on to the swinging cocoanuts, and even rival the titmice in their agility. The delightful little water-ousel, however, seems to enjoy the weather, and spends his day in diving into the river from the ice-covered margin, reappearing, after each dive, a little lower down stream. The capercaillie, too, which feeds principally on the pines, is little inconvenienced by snow or frost; but on the lower and more sheltered moors the grouse has been hard pressed, as the snow here fell softly, covering all the heather pretty equally, whereas on the mountains the force of the wind was such that large tracts of moorland were blown comparatively bare. On the date of writing, January 7th, "a fresh" has set in, and under the influence of a strong wind from the south-west the snow is disappearing rapidly. Huge masses of ice are floating down the Dee, and are doing immense damage to fishing-craft moored at the mouth of the river. Already the spring salmon have been seen quite thirty miles up stream, and it looks as though the fishing season were to be an early one.

THE GOOSANDER'S STRONG FLIGHT.

The other day I saw an interesting race between a railway train and a handsome goosander drake. Where the Deeside Railway runs close to the Dee, I was surprised to see a goosander flying low and steadily along the surface of the river. The train was going about forty-five miles an hour at the time, but the goosander gradually forged ahead, until after about a mile had been covered the bird was quite 200yds. in front, when it swerved sharply off as though content to rest on his laurels. Strangely enough, a friend told me he saw a bird—presumably the same one—do the same thing the day before, so it would seem as though the goosander took pride in being able to out-distance a train. Unlike most of the duck species, the goosanders rarely are found on still water, but haunt the river all the year through. As early as January they may be seen in pairs haunting a certain stretch of river where they will, later on, hide their nest down some disused rabbit burrow or under the shelter of thick undergrowth.

THE PTARMIGAN'S CHANGE OF PLUMAGE.

At this season of the New Year, when the ptarmigan's haunts are covered with deep snow, the birds themselves assume a plumage rivalling the pureness of the snow itself. The ptarmigan has four moults during the year, and during almost any month the new feathers will be found growing in different stages of development. In November the ptarmigan have still a few of the dark feathers of autumn left, and in the case of the young birds the full winter plumage is later in being assumed; this is also the case with the mountain hare. Some of the birds seem to remain paired the whole year through, and I think very probably that when hundreds are seen together during the winter months they may still consist largely of paired birds. At this time of the year it is almost impossible to distinguish the cock from the hen, unless of course the former utters his croaking note on taking wing. The hen bird has the red comb above the eye less pronounced than her mate, but this is noticed only at very close quarters. A remarkable fact about these lovely birds is that during the winter they haunt precisely the same spots as during the summer months, and never, under ordinary conditions, descend much lower than the 3,000ft. line, seeming to take pleasure in defying the fierce blizzards that so often rage on these exposed mountain lands.

AN UNUSUAL VISITOR.

It is very rarely indeed that we see the kingfisher in this Northern part of Scotland, but recently as many as five have been noted together, which is a very unusual occurrence indeed. Possibly the birds were a brood which had been hatched out in the neighbourhood, but the kingfisher very seldom nests with us. I hear from a friend that woodcock are also exceptionally numerous in the East Mediterranean, so it looks as if the bird world had some idea of the very severe weather we have just been experiencing. A few days before the commencement of the snow (on December 22nd) I noticed an exceptionally fine display of the Aurora Borealis. I was on the hills at the time, and when I reached the summit found the whole sky to the north and west lit up by brilliant streamers of light. On this occasion the rays shot up

until they were almost overhead, whereas, as a rule, they are confined to the northern sky. The "Northern Lights" are generally a sign of bad weather, and in this case, at least, more than justified their reputation.

THE BRAMBLING.

Every autumn the brambling or mountain finch visits us in large numbers, and is a very handsome bird to watch as it searches for food among the stubble. Just before the snow-storm I noticed several among a large flock of linnets and starlings, and the difference in their size was clearly marked when they settled down. The brambling has not been known to nest in this country, although it may possibly have done so, and by the beginning of the month of April most of them have left for their nesting sites in Scandinavia and the far North. While I have noted more bramblings than usual this winter, the fieldfares seem much less numerous than usual, having probably been driven South by the severe weather.

THE BLACK-HEADED GULL'S SPRING PLUMAGE.

During a recent visit to London I paid a visit to the seagulls on the Thames Embankment, and spent some time in watching them. The vast

majority are the black-headed gulls (*Larus ridibundus*), but a few herring-gulls were among them, and an occasional immature lesser black back. The birds are marvellously confiding, and I noticed that where twenty or thirty were standing together, no two birds were in exactly the same plumage. A fair number were immature birds, and a few had actually assumed the black—or rather dark brown—head of the nesting plumage, which is rather remarkable for December. Their call-notes, I observed, were not so loud as those they utter during the nesting months, and had a harsher ring. One bird persisted in standing on one leg, and although the wind several times almost blew him over, seemed very reluctant to place the other on the ground as an additional support. It would be interesting to ascertain where the birds which partake of London's hospitality during the winter months have their nesting sites. Probably numbers nest in Scoulton Mere in Norfolk, but it is not impossible that the gulls which one sees on the Embankment in February may, a month later, be busily engaged in claiming a nesting site on a mountain tarn in the North of Scotland.

SETON P. GORDON.

CREEPERS ON OLD BUILDINGS.—III.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I will conclude the appeal which you have kindly allowed me to make in your columns by referring more particularly to the use and abuse of creepers upon old buildings in private ownership.

A few maxims may logically be inferred from my first two letters, and I will state them as something in the nature of fundamental principles which may guide us in considering a portion of my subject which needs more delicate treatment. At any rate, they deserve to be summarised. I do not by any

means desire to support the view that ivy or other creepers are under no circumstances desirable. There may be useful, new walls which have no beauty whatever, and should be absorbed into the general landscape as soon as possible; or there may be ruins as far gone in decay as Raglan, for instance, which are rightly given a graceful shroud of green before their final sepulture. But many old buildings are still far too lovely to be hidden, and are even destroyed as well as concealed by growths which can be both beautiful and innocuous when reasonably treated. In many cases a thick screen of ivy conceals structural defects (not

due to creepers) which are unseen until they have gone so far as to be practically irreparable. For this reason alone any wall-surface more than two hundred years old should remain visible, apart altogether from the fact that time-worn surfaces of brick or stone have a charm of their own which nothing else quite equals. It must also be quite evident, from all I have said already, that ivy and other creepers are definitely and directly injurious, not only by disintegrating mortar and weakening masonry, but by displacing tiles or slates, and by choking up conduits until rain-water is given full opportunity to work destruction in its own way. Those who know the lovely abbeys of Tintern or of Fountains may judge for themselves what we should have lost by now if they had been permitted to remain as overgrown by creepers as Hurstmonceux, for instance. And in such examples a careful householder would do well to notice that the ivy has probably not always been planted "of malice aforethought." Anyone who has seen the thrushes carrying about a store of tiny red berries should know that these coral seed-pods are the core of the black fruit of ivy; and that in many such cases a bird will plant a creeper which will grow rapidly and disastrously unless immediate precautions are taken. In my own mind the man who deliberately plants ivy, and then leaves it, is only one degree worse than the man who permits the architecture in his possession to remain smothered in a growth for which he was not primarily responsible. In each case the attitude of mind is difficult to understand; for consider what would be involved if we take a fair analogy in other arts and other materials. A lovely picture, a Velasquez, a Titian, or a Turner, let us say, comes by inheritance or purchase into the possession of a collector. All over the painting, from one edge of the frame to the other, is a delicate but sufficiently-obscuring veil of lace. Is the picture to remain for ever hidden or confused because it happens to have changed hands in that condition? Will it not be better for both if the picture is hung in one place and its veil adorns another? Or take the case of music, the most perfect of



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TERRACE STEPS AT PACKWOOD.

After the ivy had been removed from the bricks.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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UNCHECKED IVY ON THE OLD TERRACE AND SUMMER-HOUSE AT PACKWOOD.

"C.L."

the arts because the one which permits least interference—under ordinary conditions—between the composer and his audience. Will any lover of some perfect Symphony be pleased to tolerate the strains of an orchestra playing a different tune at the same time as the Master's Quartette is being interpreted by competent performers? The answer to both questions is, I think, too obvious to be emphasised. And, therefore, in asking a private owner who has ancient buildings overgrown with ivy to consider

his position very carefully, I will not now press the point that these buildings are gradually being destroyed—which is not so much my present business; I will only suggest that he should not veil and confuse the beauty that is hidden—which is certainly his own.

Far more ruin is being done every month by ivy at Bolsover than had been accomplished before the century began by sheer neglect and weather. The effect of the dark growth at the



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CARVED PIERS AT THE ENTRANCE TO NEWTON FERRERS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Revealed beneath the ivy that had completely hidden them.

terrace steps is absolutely to split the design of the whole castle into two, and both walls and battlements elsewhere are being weakened rapidly. At Packwood, where the masonry in the garden is particularly fine, some precautions have been wisely taken. But there are terraces—once magnificent specimens of building—where the rank stems of ivy have gradually pulled down the brickwork piecemeal and are now destroying its very foundations, besides ruining the piers and gate pillars. At the foot of the pier shown on the left of the entrance in the picture, a gap will be seen where the ivy, which once completely covered it, has thrown the heavy and hard mass of Cornish stone right out of the perpendicular. Other piers on the south front, standing about 12ft. high, were also entirely shrouded in ivy, which had been clipped, year after year, into a solid mass of undergrowth. When this vegetation was removed by a clean cut down the middle, the two halves fell on each side with so exact an impression of the stonework that they looked like the two sides of a mould made to cast the piers in plaster. The steps shown in the accompanying photograph are shaped like a broad-ended spoon, and each brick is fashioned like a wedge. When the ivy was cut away from them the gaps made by encroaching roots and branches became only too sadly apparent; and an arm thrust into one of the dense masses of ivy covering the piers came in contact with a beautiful vase that had been invisible for at least thirty years, and had been broken and mutilated by a stem growing through one of its handles. The damage, however, is here for the moment arrested, and it becomes evident that earlier precautions would have shown even better results. The terraces of Newton Ferrers revealed almost an equal amount of devastation before they were cleared for the purpose of being photographed for these pages. Before that cleansing process had been undertaken, the masonry was so smothered in the shapeless excrescences of exaggerated growth that it was impossible to say whether an iron fence or a brick wall was underneath. And, in passing, I may point out that it is not always wise to let ivy grow unchecked even over iron. The railings along Park Lane, round the house of the late Mr. Alfred Beit, furnish an excellent and easily-verified example of rapid growth. In many of them it is already impossible to see how carefully designed and how well made was the original hammered iron now so effectually concealed. It may be hoped the new owner will take appropriate steps to check the mischief. Cowley Manor is another instance, drawn from these pages, of the improvement effected by clearing out superfluous ivy from spacious and splendid terraces that were meant to stand out in all the well-proportioned dignity of their original architectural composition. They are infinitely finer now than when they were smothered in superfluous vegetation.

Fawsley Park is situated in the extreme south-west of Northamptonshire, and Charles I. was hunting a buck there when the news came of the advance of the enemy which ended at Naseby. In this park, at the foot of a hill, embowered in stately elms, stand the picturesque ruins of the old Dower House of the sixteenth century, which contains the solitary example of twisted brick chimneys in the county. By the courtesy of Miss Dryden and Messrs. Bemrose, publishers of "Memorials of Old Northamptonshire," I am kindly permitted to use in this article an illustration of this house. It has been uninhabited since the end of the eighteenth century, and it is suffocated in ivy, which is concealing all its detailed carved work and ruining the vital structure of its masonry. The roots of the plant are plainly seen emerging from the soil, and are of extraordinary strength and thickness. It would surely be possible to take some measures which would reduce the virulence of the plague

and give a better chance to the beautiful architecture of a house that is unique in its position and of great general interest. White Ladies, at Boscobel in Shropshire, is another instance of the ravages of unchecked vegetation; but here the owner has shown signs of desiring to remedy the evil before it is too late. The Church House at Theydon Garnon in Essex has practically no sound roof left, owing to the depredations of various creepers, and the sixteenth century tower of the church is also in grave danger, owing to its being completely covered with ivy, which, if it remains, will mask the underlying peril until a final catastrophe occurs. At Levenshall in Cumberland you may see a most extraordinary contrast. On the one



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IVY ON THE SOUTH-WEST WALL OF BOLSOVER.

"C.L."

hand are gardens and cultivated shrubs, which have only attained perfection after two centuries of continuous attention; on the other is visible the heart-breaking result of 200 years of sheer neglect of ivy and other creepers, which have already done far more damage than the labour bestowed elsewhere can ever compensate. It is satisfactory to be able to mention at least one home where the growth of Virginia creeper is properly regulated and understood. This is Old Place, Lindfield, Surrey, where the garden front is chiefly composed of a soft, golden-hued stone, with lovely streaks of iron ore running through it. The ampelopsis grows across its surface, but as much care is taken of its development as if it were the most valuable of plants; for it is so cut and trimmed that only the

beautiful young shoots are seen, so that the tender green of spring-time and the russet hues of autumn are equally attractive upon the dominating surface of the visible stonework underneath. This does no harm, and is a positive addition to the charm of the whole building; but such restraint is rare indeed. Most people forget that creepers exist for the sake of the buildings; they seem to be grateful that masses of masonry are ready for the creepers to conceal. As has been often pointed out, some masonry—and some forms of building which do not deserve the name of architecture—are much better hidden as soon as possible; and this is where the beneficent opportunity for ivy and Virginia creeper really arises. Corrugated iron roofs may sometimes be a sad necessity, but it is always possible to train some green foliage over them.



IVY ON THE DOWER HOUSE, FAWSLEY, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

A new brick wall, entirely plain, is occasionally essential; it need no longer glare like a plague spot in the landscape if it is judiciously covered with leaves until the bricks have mellowed. But when a house was built before 1750, and was designed to fill a certain space in the full plan of an estate by means of certain masses set in due proportion and adorned with well-considered detail, then I say that it is unfair to the old architect, unfair to the present aspect of the building, and unfair to our posterity that we should allow the work of our forefathers to be first concealed and then destroyed by the fungoid accretions of a parasitic vegetation for which there is absolutely no excuse either in Art or Nature.

I am, Sir, with profound gratitude for the hospitality of your columns, faithfully yours,

T. A. C.

THE PEASANTS OF THE NAHE TAHL.

HILLFOLK, yet tillers of the soil, these dwellers in the Southern Rheinprovinz people a land of rounded knolls, vine clad, of crooked little straths and pleasant smiling valleys. Unlike our peasants here at home, each

farmer owns the land he works, while the rich soil, assisted by a warmer climate, more generously rewards his toil. This may or may not be the reason which makes them labour so industriously and bids the ploughshare follow hard upon the



A HILL ROAD.

scythe; but no sooner is the harvest gathered in than the ground is manured and resown with the next crop in rotation, so that three distinct crops are frequently raised from the same field in one season. The land is almost entirely arable, wooded, or laid out in vineyards. No lowing cattle tread lush meadows nor do sheep graze on the short grass among the rocks. Pasture, indeed, appears to be considered but an opportunity lost, and each owner is compelled by law to keep his land clean and free from weeds, lest they spread to the fields and vineyards of his neighbours. The unfenced fields traversed by rough and winding cart tracks are dotted here and there with cherry, apple, pear and walnut trees, which form another considerable source of income. While much of the fruit is sent to the towns or stored for winter use, the greater part is made into cider and perry, which are either sold to dealers in bulk or retailed in the taverns kept by many of the farmers themselves. As there are but few horses in the neighbourhood, and since those, as a rule, are both small and poor, all the draught work is done



PLOUGHING IN SOON WALDT.

vineyards, which cover the sunny side of every hill. In appearance they are somewhat disappointing, and not nearly so picturesque

as a Kentish hop garden, owing to the fact that the plants are cut back to about 3ft. high. No one, however, can fail to be impressed with their enormous extent, every hill as far as the eye can reach being covered with neat rows of stout poles, each of which supports a vine. The picking season begins in September, and is a time of great gaiety, as friends come together to assist from far and near, and many strange old customs prevail. For instance, on the date fixed upon for starting, no one is allowed to approach the vineyards except by a certain road across which a rope is stretched. Here all collect together till the rope has been ceremoniously removed and the signal given to pass through. The grapes are gathered in little round baskets and transferred to a kind of deep creel, in which they are carried direct to the winepress. This consists of a heavy stone trough into which a block can be screwed down. Here the grapes are crushed, and the juice escaping through an outlet runs direct into casks which are only filled to within 6in. or 8in. of the top. The casks are allowed to lie undisturbed till about March, and during this time fermentation takes place. They are then filled up, and the bung just laid on, and after they have



A STREET IN MEDDERSHEIM

by oxen. Some of the cattle are magnificent beasts of great strength and size, and they always form an interesting group as they plod slowly past yoked to their rumbling waggons or wheeled ploughs. The farmhouses, instead of being situated on the land their occupiers own, are collected into little villages three or four miles apart. This arrangement, while, doubtless, made originally for the sake of mutual protection, possesses many advantages. For example, the water supply of the district is all pumped from deep wells, which it would be very costly for a single household to sink and maintain, while it also renders unnecessary long journeys to church and post office. An illustration of how much they are ahead of us in some respects, even in such rural districts, is given by the fact that the telegraph poles support in addition a wire carrying a current of sufficient strength to drive an electric motor, and when any threshing has to be done the machine and motor are taken from place to place as required, and run off the nearest convenient wire; and it is rather interesting to see this most modern form of energy being applied among the antiquated ox waggons and implements of a peasant homestead. The main support of the majority of such peasant farmers is, of course, their

about March, and during this time fermentation takes place. They are then filled up, and the bung just laid on, and after they have



WOMEN WORKERS IN THE HARVEST-FIELD.



FOURTEENTH CENTURY HOUSES: MONZINGEN.

lain a further period of six weeks or two months the liquid is drawn off and is ready for use. If it is intended to bottle the wine the casks are again allowed to stand for a further six weeks or so, when it is once more decanted and bottled. In winter the people busy themselves attending to their forest land, clearing undergrowth and cutting wood for fuel, and in making and repairing their implements, while the fact that the houses are in communities allows them to enjoy more intercourse with one another than is the case in many scattered districts in Britain. Taking all things into consideration, the peasants of the Nahe Thäl are much better off than those of the same class in this country, and it only remains to be said that, as far as appearances go, they are happy and contented with their lot.

J. F. MUIR.

IN THE GARDEN.

SWEET VIOLETS IN WINTER.

VIOLETS are flowering exceptionally well this winter, a fact due no doubt to the mild weather until Christmas dawned. The varieties raised of recent years have given fresh zest to the culture, to our mind, of the sweetest flower that blows, a flower of which we never tire from its opening on a warm wayside bank in the early days of the year until the last bloom has faded in our cold frame. The double sorts seem to be increasing rapidly in popularity, and this is not surprising when their beauty is realised, double flowers of large size, and each filled with the sweetest of perfumes. Marie Louise is still the Violet that holds the largest share of the Violet-grower's affection, but Mrs. J. J. Astor is running it very close in the race for first place, several Violet-lovers growing only this variety. The flower is quite double, and the colouring distinct. It is difficult to describe, but may be called a soft mauve with a shade of red in it, a peculiarly beautiful colour far from common in the world of flowers. Lady Hume-Campbell is another favourite, and of the white Violets we prefer the double-flowered Comte de Brazza, while of the singles Princess of Wales still reigns supreme, the flower having boldness of size, without coarseness, and a deep blue colour to commend it, with, too, a delicious perfume. Few plants are so easily grown as the Violet. It detests smoke, and cannot therefore be grown near large towns, dislikes anything in the shape of artificial warmth, and resents coddling. The plants may be grown in the roughest wooden frame, into which they should go early in September. They must be as close to the glass as possible, given air on all favourable occasions, and when frost does come, put on the lights and over them a double set of mats. This, with a liberal packing of leaves and bracken round the sides, will afford sufficient protection. It is a pure delight to open a frame full of Violets, and drink in the rich outpouring of scent. We can only compare it with the breath of the freshly-opened Auriculas on a spring morning.

ROSE GRUSS AN TEPLITZ FOR PLANTING IN MASSES.

A Rose-grower writes as follows about this Rose: "Roses are very popular at the present time for planting in masses for effect in the pleasure grounds. The subject of this note is an ideal one for the purpose. In the early summer days the plants do not flower very freely, but at the end of July

and during August the bright crimson flowers are a blaze of colour. The foliage, when young, has a bronze tinge, changing to a deep leathery green. It is essentially a garden Rose, the flowers of moderate size with rather thin petals; in fact, it might almost be described as half-double. Some growers when pruning recommend cutting the plants hard back, but I prefer to simply thin out the growths. Of course, much depends on the position of the bed. Numerous vigorous growths are produced from the base, which often carry trusses of flowers, twenty to thirty in number. It can also be used as a pillar Rose, having a decided climbing tendency. It is a Hybrid Tea, and, as suggested by the name, of Continental origin, having been sent out by the German raiser, Geschurnd, in 1897."

THE SUNRISE TOMATO.

The Tomato called Sunrise has created a mild sensation in the vegetable world, and though we rarely refer to homely esculents in these notes, we must draw attention to this valuable fruit, or vegetable, whichever one is pleased to call it. A well-known gardener writes as follows about it: "During the past few years several useful Tomatoes have been introduced, and it was thought difficult to raise any new variety better than those that have preceded it, but Sunrise is welcome at all seasons of the year. I sowed seed late in September, and the plants are now in full fruit. They have not been given any special treatment, but grown on the back wall of a low pit and in 8in. pots. Sunrise is an ideal amateur's tomato. Some may appreciate a fruit of larger size, but, as a rule, the larger the fruit the poorer its quality."

PLANTS IN TUBS.

It is well to get as much variety as possible in the garden, not to repeat one thing until it becomes tiresome. This is true of the use of tub plants, which are confined to a few sorts, whereas many things may be used with success for this purpose. The Agapanthus is, perhaps, the most handsome of all tub plants, handsome not only in leaf, but in flower. The strong tall stem holds a crown of delightful blue flowers, blue as the summer sky itself. It is not hardy, except in the extreme south of our land, but protection may be so readily given by mats, or by removing the tub on the threshold of winter to a stable or outhouse, where it can be kept free from frost. We should like to see the old scented Geraniums return to their former popularity, and they make excellent tub plants, as those who have seen the noble examples in Mr. Leopold Rothschild's garden at Gunnersbury know full well. Rollisson's Unique is the finest variety for the purpose, but these must have the protection of a conservatory during winter, where they can receive the attention they demand. Myrtles, Bays, Portugal Laurels, Agave, the Mexican Orange-flower (*Choisya ternata*), the Orange, Yuccas, Heliotropes, the Coral Tree (*Erythrina Crista-galli*) and *Brugmansia* Knightii, which has a large tubular creamy white flower, and the fragrant Garland-flower (*Hedychium gardeniana*) may also be named. All require protection in most parts of the British Isles.

FURTHER NOTES ON THE HARDY PRIMROSES.—A WINTER-FLOWERING KIND.

P. megacaulia.—This is one of the most recent introductions, and was brought about seven years ago by W. Sprenger of Naples from the mountains of Laristan in Asia Minor. Fortunately it is not in the least difficult to grow, but it is more perhaps a Primrose for the alpine or cold house than for the open garden, the reason being its winter-flowering habit. It is readily recognised by the round leathery leaves and soft lilac or rose-purple flowers. The way to increase it is by dividing the root directly the flowers are over, and the pieces may be either potted in a mixture of sandy loam and leaf-mould and kept in a cold frame, or planted in the rock garden. It is advisable to grow it in a frame facing north during the summer months.

P. minima.—As the name indicates, this is one of the smaller in size of the hardy Primroses. It makes a little tuft, but the flowers are large, and sometimes appear singly and sometimes in pairs, the colour being violet-rose. This is one of the Primroses for the bog garden, or moist soil in moderate shade. With this may be associated the charming *P. nivalis*, which also delights in moisture.

P. Parryi.—Another moisture-loving Primula from the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, the flowers rich crimson in colour and produced in large umbels. It is one of the most beautiful of the family, and must have a moist, spongy, well-drained soil. Seeds germinate very freely, and young plants may be grown in small pots plunged in a shady frame. The soil to use is peat and loam mixed with leaf-mould.

P. rosea.—This is one of the gems of the family, and should be in every bog garden for the sake of its bright rose-coloured flowers, which vary in shade according to the variety. It came to us from the Western Himalayas in 1879, and, fortunately, offers no cultural difficulties whatever, spreading freely when in a moist, peaty soil not freely exposed to the sun. As our wilding Primrose loves the shady bank, so do the majority of the other species, moisture without stagnation and a soil in which peat forms a large proportion constituting ideal conditions. When increase by division of the root is desired this should be accomplished after the flowering is over, the time most advisable in the case of all the Primroses, whether species or otherwise. We have more than once advocated a little alpine house in the garden, and one of the first plants chosen to be grown in a pan should be *P. rosea* and its variety *grandiflora*. During the summer it may be placed in a north frame, and at the time of potting the soil to use is peat and loam in about equal parts, with the usual crocks in the bottom of the pots to act as drainage.

P. viscaria.—Few of the Primulas are better known than this vigorous plant which is found on the Alps and Pyrenees, and the flowers vary greatly in colour from deep purple to white. It is a kind for the rock garden, where it succeeds well in gritty soil and between bits of sandstone.

THE HARDY PRIMROSES IN POTS.

The following hints from a practical grower of the Primulas are useful: "Many of the Alpine Primulas may be grown with advantage in pots or pans for a display in the alpine house when they come into flower. Several species are specially adapted for this purpose, notably *P. marginata*, which is very tree-flowering, and lasts in perfection for some time. Even when not in bloom the singular beauty of the variegated leaves makes the plant very attractive. When grown in pans Primulas should be potted in rich, porous

soil, thoroughly well drained, as stagnant moisture of any kind is fatal to them. They require plenty of water in the growing season, and, when possible, rain water should be used. The best time for repotting is just after they have finished flowering, so that they will have time to make good growths as early as possible in the year. A frame with a north aspect is most suitable in which to grow Primulas, and the pans should be plunged to the rim in ashes. Leave the lights off through the summer months, but

have them at hand in autumn and winter to protect the plants in times of excessive rains. Plenty of air should always be admitted during winter. Primulas are readily raised from seed, which should be sown as soon as it is ripe. Pot the seedlings off as soon as they are large enough to handle, and grow them in a shady frame. Some are very slow in growth, and require to be carefully watched to prevent an overgrowth of weeds, the Liverwort in particular."

THE BOOTED EAGLE.



H. Moore.

POSITION OF NEST, WITH HEN BIRD.

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ONLY those who have spent a hot weather season in Gibraltar can fully understand the pleasure with which one hails an opportunity of escaping from the Rock for a day in Spain, away from the enervating influence of that bane to one's existence, the Levanter, which is specially prevalent during the summer months. It is a happy relief indeed to the ordinary mortal to be free from the monotonous routine of life in a fortress; but how much more

so to one fond of natural history, for the Cork Woods, the nearest fringe of which is about eight miles away, are the home of many uncommon varieties of birds, among which the eagles stand pre-eminent. Of the several varieties of this interesting species found in this part of the world, the booted eagle, the subject of this article, is the smallest, and is migratory, arriving from Africa in March, and returning to its Southern home in September. It is found in the wooded districts, and is



H. Moore.

MALE BOOTED EAGLE.

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H. Moore.

YOUNG ONES TEN DAYS OLD.

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still fairly plentiful, though its numbers must be sadly diminished by the many "naturalists" who seem to consider that their so-called "love of Nature" justifies them in robbing every nest they find, or have pointed out to them by the local goatherds or woodcutters. In general colouring these birds vary considerably, some being dark brown above and white below, while others are of a much more khaki tint. The nest, which is built of sticks and lined with green leaves (the latter being continually renewed) is usually placed in the main fork of a cork or oak tree, sometimes very high up, but I have found them on a horizontal branch quite low down and also in thick ivy. The eggs, two being the usual number, are white, but often get much stained. The breeding season seems to vary a good deal, as on April 20th I found a nest with two eggs, and on June 13th another, but this latter may, of course, have belonged to a pair whose original nest had been robbed. Their principal food consists of rabbits, small birds and lizards; to the latter, indeed, they appear to be specially partial, judging from the numbers I have found in their eyries—in one nest alone I found seven large ones—and this marks our eagle down as a good friend to the game preserver, for the lizard is an inveterate egg eater, and as it is a bold and active climber its radius of destruction is very extensive. So though there is no doubt that these birds of prey do take toll of the game, I for my part feel quite convinced that the good they do by their warfare against other poaching species far outweighs the evil of their own depredations.

Early on the morning of May 7th I started for a day's outing, and after a couple of hours' tramp through the woods was lucky enough to find a nest fairly low down. Divesting myself of my photographic impedimenta, I climbed up, and to my delight found it contained two eggs. Descending again, I made a stout cord fast to the

camera, and soon had it up beside me at the nest; but to be close to a nest in a tree is one thing, and to obtain a decent picture another. The small branches and leaves which are continually on the move shut out a great deal of the light, and one's own position is none too secure when both hands are required to hold the camera steady. Another great difficulty is the large size of the nest and its close proximity to the photographer. However, on this occasion Dame Fortune came to my aid and I was fairly successful. Wishing to secure a picture of the old birds, I then hid the camera carefully in a thick bush growing on the top of a bank close at hand, and making a screen of branches for myself a little further back, I crept underneath and prepared for a long wait. In this I was not disappointed, for it was not until more than two hours later that the hen bird returned, and I snapped her as she stood eyeing the camera with evident suspicion. Satisfied

apparently, however, that there was no danger, she at length settled down on her eggs.

Here I was confronted with a new difficulty, as I did not wish to frighten her by revealing my presence suddenly. However,

luck attended me once more, for on the approach of a passing party of charcoal-burners talking loudly, she quietly slipped off, and I was able to change my plate. It was three o'clock before she again returned, and the sun having by this time worked round so much that it was almost shining into my lens, I gave it up and wended my way slowly homewards. On subsequent occasions I got snaps of the male, but at such a distance away that the results

were very disappointing. On May 24th I again visited the nest and found two young birds, funny little objects covered with white down; but though I came again on several other occasions I never succeeded in getting a really good picture. Try



H. Moore.

AGED TWENTY-ONE DAYS.

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H. Moore.

NEARLY FLEDGED.

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what I would, nothing would induce them to smile and look pleasant; and, indeed, I do not wonder, as such an unusual apparition so close to their nursery must have frightened them terribly. There was no convenient branch to lash the camera to, nor could I take their portraits from below where they would not see me, so I was forced to make the best of a bad job. On June 18th they were getting their feathers, and on the 29th were almost fledged. A little later I was exceedingly lucky in getting an excellent photograph of one perched on an adjacent stump. It was his first step into the world, and the following day both flew away. I spent very many hours hidden up by this nest, and it was most interesting watching the old birds bringing food and attending to their domestic duties. Even at a very early age the sight of the young was wonderful, and they always seemed to know of their parents' approach long before they appeared at the nest. The cock and hen divided their labour, and, as a rule, each returned about every two hours; but the former was very much the shyer of the two, and the very slightest movement on my part was instantly detected, with the result that he was not seen again for that day. H. MOORE.

THE "COMFORTABLE WORD EVOLUTION."

THERE is no doubt a substratum of truth in the contention that science has robbed the world of much of its poetry; and especially in so far as the great mysteries of life are concerned. But this is true only in so far as the layman is affected. He has been told that such and such of man's most cherished beliefs and traditions are but myths; old wives' tales, having little or no foundation in fact. And there has grown up in consequence, in certain quarters, a resentment against the scientist. On the other hand, the discoveries and advances of science have been adduced to prove that we live in a "practical" age wherein is no room for mystery. As a matter of fact, the mystery of life, under the ægis of science, has deepened, its wonders have increased an hundred-fold. But much of this newer aspect is as yet hidden in learned treatises, and in a language not understood of the people. During the last few years, however, a great many books have appeared whose aim has been to spread a knowledge of the new learning. Unfortunately most of these have failed utterly of their purpose, giving but a garbled version of the truth, while others, covering too wide a field, have but made confusion worse confounded. Among the few good guides, however, from henceforth, must be reckoned that by F. W. Headley ("Life and Evolution," Duckworth and Co.). This work, which appeared just as the year 1906 entered on its last lap, though mainly zoological in its scope, is founded on the bed-rock of Biology, and contains a very clear statement of the beginning of Life, and the nature of the simplest plants and animals. Mr. Headley appears to have taken some considerable care to avoid any semblance of dogmatism, or partiality, though here and there he has broken through his restraint. As, for example, when, in discussing the Origin of Life, rightly dismissing the theory of spontaneous generation—which has strangely enough cropped up again recently—and taking his stand on the dictum "all living things spring from living things," he asks "Which can claim priority, the vegetable or the animal?" And answers "The plant . . . must have

been first in the field." Very minute, simple plants, just blobs of jelly, but plants. How they came into being he does not even suggest, and this, to many, will be a disappointment. But is it so certain that the plants can claim the proud distinction of being the first living organism? Professor Ray Lankester many years ago came to an exactly opposite conclusion, and showed good reason for according this place to the animals. In his article on the Protozoa, in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," he discussed the nature of the first protoplasm which was evolved from not-living matter on the earth's surface, and came to the conclusion that "the earliest protoplasm did not possess the power of feeding on carbonic acid." "A conceivable state of things," he continues, "is that a vast amount of albuminoids and other such compounds had been brought into existence by those processes which culminated in the development of the first protoplasm, and it seems therefore likely enough that the first protoplasm fed upon these antecedent steps in its own evolution, just as animals feed on organic compounds at the present day, more especially as the large creeping plasmodia of some mycetozoa feed on vegetable refuse. It indeed seems not at all improbable that, apart from their elaborate fructification, the mycetozoa represent more closely than any other living forms the original ancestors of the whole organic world . . . Thus then we are led to entertain the paradox that though the animal is dependent on the plant for its food, yet the animal preceded the plant in evolution, and we look among the lower Protozoa, and not among the lower Protophyta, for the nearest representative of that first protoplasm which was the result of a long and gradual

evolution of chemical structure, and the starting point of the development of organic form."

In yet another place we venture to differ from Mr. Headley. And this is where in discussing the minds of men and animals he contends that "The micro-organisms have minds," that amœba, one of the simplest of living organisms, "a minute blob of protoplasm forming a single cell, has beyond dispute the power of choice."

This is emphatically much too dogmatic a statement to make. It is not only not beyond dispute, but it is exceedingly improbable. The actions which the author interprets as governed by choice, or by mind, are, it is generally conceded by those who are most qualified to speak on the matter, much more probably determined by "chemiotaxis," or, as some have it, "chemical allurements." That is to say, amœba is drawn towards and ingests desmids, or diatoms, or other particles of food by some inherent quality of its protoplasm, which is "attracted" by other protoplasm, just as spermatozoa are attracted to the ova they are about to fertilise, and not even Mr. Headley, we suspect, would endow spermatozoa with a "mind." Again, in this same chapter, he assures us that birds do not play. This may be so,

but it is seriously open to question. This is decidedly a book to be read by all those who desire to have the last word on the evolution theory set before them in plain, straightforward language. We cannot say as much for another work that has recently appeared on this subject of evolution. This is an ambitious work, appearing under the alluring title of "Darwinism and the Problems of Life" (London: A. Owen and Co.), by Dr. Conrad Guenther. Originally written in German, it has been translated by one who has very obviously no first-hand acquaintance with the subject. Clumsily constructed, indifferently translated, and bristling with inaccuracies, we cannot but regard it as unfortunate that it should have gained a wider circulation by its appearance in English—of a sort.

W. P. PYCRAFT.



H. Moore.

YOUNG MALE BOOTED EAGLE.

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IMAGINE the desolate bay of Mont St. Michel at low tide on the night of September 29th, 1591, just six weeks before Henry of Navarre began the regular investment of the city of Rouen. There was no moon, and only the fitful light of a few stars shone here and there upon the pools of water or the quaking sands as Montgomery's Huguenots picked their way cautiously across from Pontorson, between the ebb and flow. They worked slowly round to that tiny chapel of St. Aubert, on the very edge of the north-western rock, from which a flight of steps led upwards to the lowest floor of the "Merveille." The Cardinal de Joyeuse was the Abbot at that time, holding the Mount for the Catholics, and it will easily be understood that his military governor, Du Boschage de Basternay, did not post a sentinel at the bottom of the steps that night. So, finding no obstacle, the Huguenots mounted silently in single file until they found themselves at the foot of that cliff of masonry which supports the lowest floor of the great cellar of the "Merveille." Its windows were still high above their heads; but they saw the light that had been prearranged in one of them, and the first Huguenot took his place in the huge basket of wickerwork and cord by which the monks hauled up their grain and wine.

The traitor was apparently at his post, for as soon as the soldier's weight had tightened the cord the great windlass

overhead slowly began to revolve. The Huguenot rose in the air, and disappeared in the black hole that opened in the lower storeys of the "Merveille." Another and another followed. The same deep silence still wrapped the mysterious abbey above them, and spread darkly over the sands beneath their feet. A far-off murmur from the horizon warned Montgomery that there was no time to lose. Their retreat would soon be cut off for some hours. His companions, Sourdeval and Chasegney, became impatient at hearing nothing of what was going on inside the abbey, in spite of nearly a hundred men having gone in. They shouted for news, and there was no reply. They called up to their friends to throw them down the body of a monk to show that all was going well. No answer. Suddenly a black and shapeless form seemed to detach itself from the deep shadows of the towering masonry above, where the rope still swung on which the soldiers had been suspended in the air as though from some gigantic gallows-tree. The sinister object swayed for a moment as the night wind caught its black folds, and hovered like some foul-omened bird of prey above them, then fell swiftly at their feet. It was a dead body in the cowl and cassock of a monk.

Chasegney was for mounting at once, but Montgomery restrained him, for the shattered corpse had not entirely removed his growing suspicions. He sent up his most trusted and his



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SENTINEL'S WALK ON THE BATTLEMENTS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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FORTIFIED BRIDGE AT THE ABBEY ENTRANCE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

bravest soldier, with strict orders that at all hazards the truth must be known. The man swung slowly upwards, and disappeared in silence as before; and all the time the lapping of the little rivulets upon the sand grew more insistent on the midnight air, and a cold breeze murmured from the east with the sound of the advancing sea. A great cry came from the walls above them, "Treason! Treason!" and another shout, soon stifled. The next moment the long rope fell downwards, severed by a sword-cut, and the end that fell beside Montgomery's feet was red with blood. All means of getting into the grim abbey were henceforth destroyed. The tide was rising rapidly. With panic at their

right and left. A man was drowning. Wet to the skin, horror struck, despairing, the remnant of Montgomery's command staggered into Pontorson just as the monks upon the mount had finished their work within the walls of the "Merveille," now brightly lit above the rippling sea.

Each Huguenot, as he appeared within the cellar in the basket, had been swiftly bound and gagged by two of the abbey guard within. The first score or so were taken through the almonry, and despatched in the Salle des Gardes round the other side. The procedure was soon found too slow. The next few dozen were butchered in the almonry. The last five-and-

twenty were stabbed to death upon the cellar floor. Montgomery's favourite soldier had alone been spared. He had seen the death of the comrade who preceded him, and, with Basternay's own dagger at his throat, he turned and shouted to his friends below; and, for that final act of self-sacrificing heroism, they granted him his life. It is the one bright spot in a scene of treachery and carnage.

Let us leave it, and the terrible memories of "Montgomery's Cellar," and go upwards, nearer to the light. Exactly above it is the magnificent room known as the Salle des Chevaliers. It was used, soon after it had been built, as the chapter house and general meeting-place of the monks, and contains three rows of columns, which present a happy combination of strength with dignified ornament. The two rows nearest the sea rise perpendicularly above the pillars of the cellar. The third row is possible only because the rock is now gradually sloping upwards, and these columns therefore fill the extra space right up to the crypt of the north transept of the church—an arrangement which not only explains the greater extent of this hall as compared with the cellar, but also provides an excellent example of the skill with which Gothic builders could adapt their methods of construction to spaces of any size or shape. The plan of this hall was also modified by the consideration that it had to hold the northern, eastern and western arcades of the cloister above it, and its walls had to bear that weight in addition to the direct thrust of their own vaults. The southern arcade of the cloister was perfectly safe above that part of the Salle des Chevaliers which was additionally strengthened by the substructures of the northern transept; but it was very necessary not to overtax the north wall of the salle, and the masonry and vaulting are carefully and successfully calculated to that end. The ribs concentrate the weight from above on strong pillars, which never become ungraceful; and the thrust upon the outer walls is compensated by a magnificent series of buttresses. Few better examples of Gothic construction could be picked out which are more simple and honest in their solution of the given problem; and the simplicity which only comes from perfect knowledge brings its own reward in a lasting charm of appropriate proportions that can never, in its own way, be surpassed. Even in the accidental difficulties produced by such details as the combination of hooded chimneys with the vaulting over them, the same frank and capable solution is

apparent; and it will be noticed that two fireplaces were considered necessary for warming so large an apartment, just as we find at Laon or Coucy, while at Fougères, Fontenoy and the palaces of Bourges and Poitiers there are three. The castle of Montargis had four. The artist who solved so many constructive problems was no less able to give his mind to decoration, as the capitals of his columns will sufficiently demonstrate. But he knew where to stop. The sheaf of springing ribs is gracefully festooned together in one strong band of stone above the ring of leaves; and the bases, instead of reproducing the mere circle, are octagonal, which seems to suggest greater strength, at the same time that it



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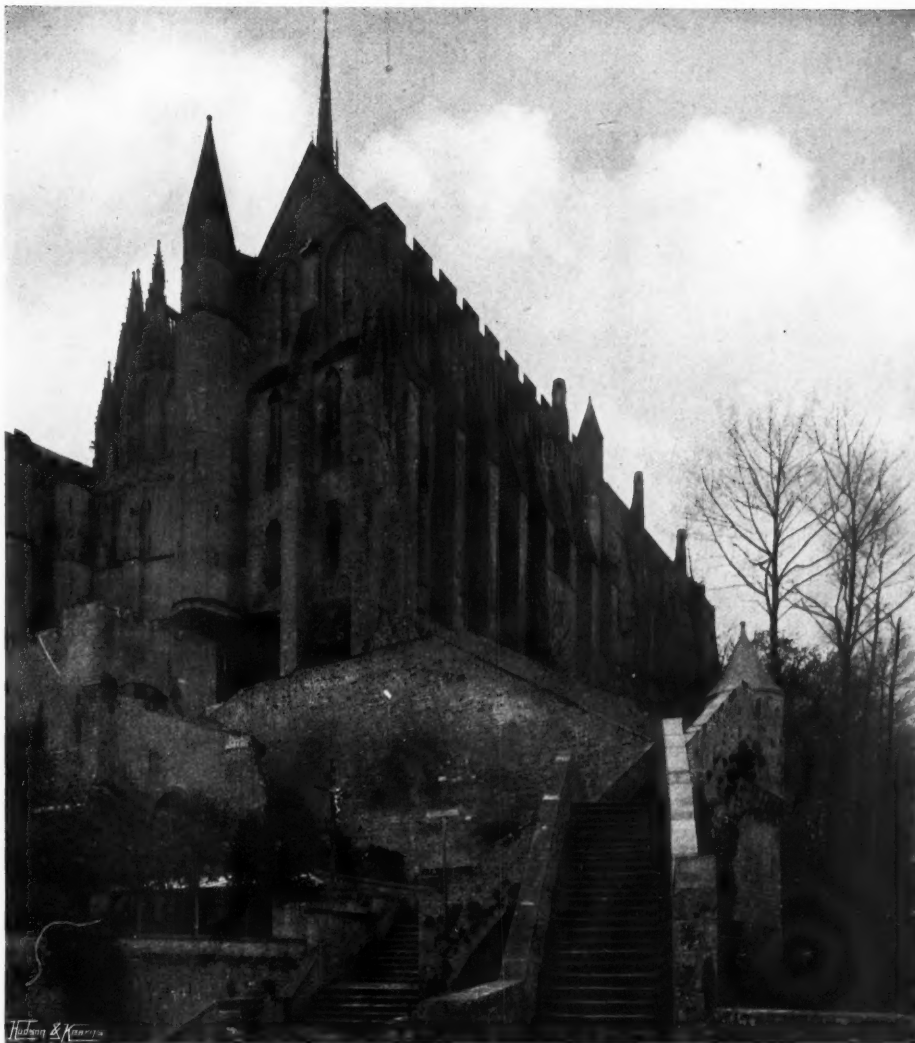
BUTTRESSES OF THE APSE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

hearts, and troubled questionings for their lost comrades, Montgomery's men fled hurriedly towards the chapel of St. Aubert, and stumbled in terror across the sands towards Pontorson. Sourdeval knew the way; but the little stream of Couesnon that they had jumped across so easily an hour or so before was boiling angrily between its shifting banks. Every pool of water in the starlight seemed throwing out tentacles of living moisture. A path of sand that ran out straight before them would shiver suddenly, and disappear beneath a sullen wave of grey, thick water, that grew deep even as they discovered its coming. Sourdeval held on. Here and there a bubbling cry sounded to

pleasantly varies the design. The name of the Salle des Chevaliers is usually said to be derived from the fact that within it, in 1470, Louis XI. held the first chapter of the Knights of the Order of St. Michael which he had instituted the year before; and it is not difficult to realise how splendid was the scene when the knights, clad in white damask, sewn with ermine and with golden cockle-shells, filled this magnificent apartment at the bidding of the King. But this was the only meeting ever held here, for in 1557 the headquarters of the Order were transferred to Vincennes. To my mind it is more probable that the name Salle des Chevaliers came from a fact far more striking in the history of France, and was meant to commemorate the heroism of those 119 knights, gathered from all the country round to defend St. Michael's Mount from the attacks of the English in 1434. The fortress upon Tombelaine, which the English then held, is visible from its windows, as is the well near the chapel of St. Aubert, one of the most important strategic points in the fortifications. The names of all these victorious knights, who kept the English out after nearly the whole of Northern France had fallen, were carefully preserved, with their shields, on Mont St. Michel; and this hall may well have been chosen by Louis XI. for the first chapter of his new Order of chivalry in special commemoration of the courageous defenders of five-and-thirty years before. The Salle des Hôtes is the graceful apartment further to the east of the Salle des Chevaliers, and in distinction from the monastical uses for which the latter had been first intended, this Salle des Hôtes was built to receive those distinguished guests whose welcome would appropriately partake much less of an ecclesiastical character than of the free and dignified hospitality extended by one "grand seigneur" to another. Its three huge chimneys, the rich frescoes and tapestries which originally decorated it, and the slender beauty

of its columns and vaulting, all emphasise the same impression. The separate chapel of Ste. Madeleine, which is an integral part of the same building, adds the final proof that this was an apartment reserved for men and women of distinction who were not supposed to mingle with the life of the monks; and the original plan of the staircases attached to it is yet another indication that the place was definitely set apart. It is quite possible that the hall was also used by the Abbot on those occasions when the exercise of his justice, as a feudal seigneur, necessitated the presence within his walls of a mixed company who were not admitted to the privacy of his community. The very various uses (which were often degradations) to which this noble hall was put in successive centuries do not invalidate the argument for the original intentions of its builders, and the fact that Pierre Béraud made it a refectory in 1629 need not confuse the modern visitor. The real original refectory is on the next floor, exactly above the Salle des Hôtes, and to the east of the cloister; and as the traveller is wont to be still further mystified by being told (even by so excellent an authority as Camille Enlart) that this long range of narrow windows was so arranged in order to light up the separate cubicles of the monks' dormitory, it is worth



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NORTH-EAST ANGLE OF THE "MERVEILLE." "COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE MONKS' AMBULATORY.

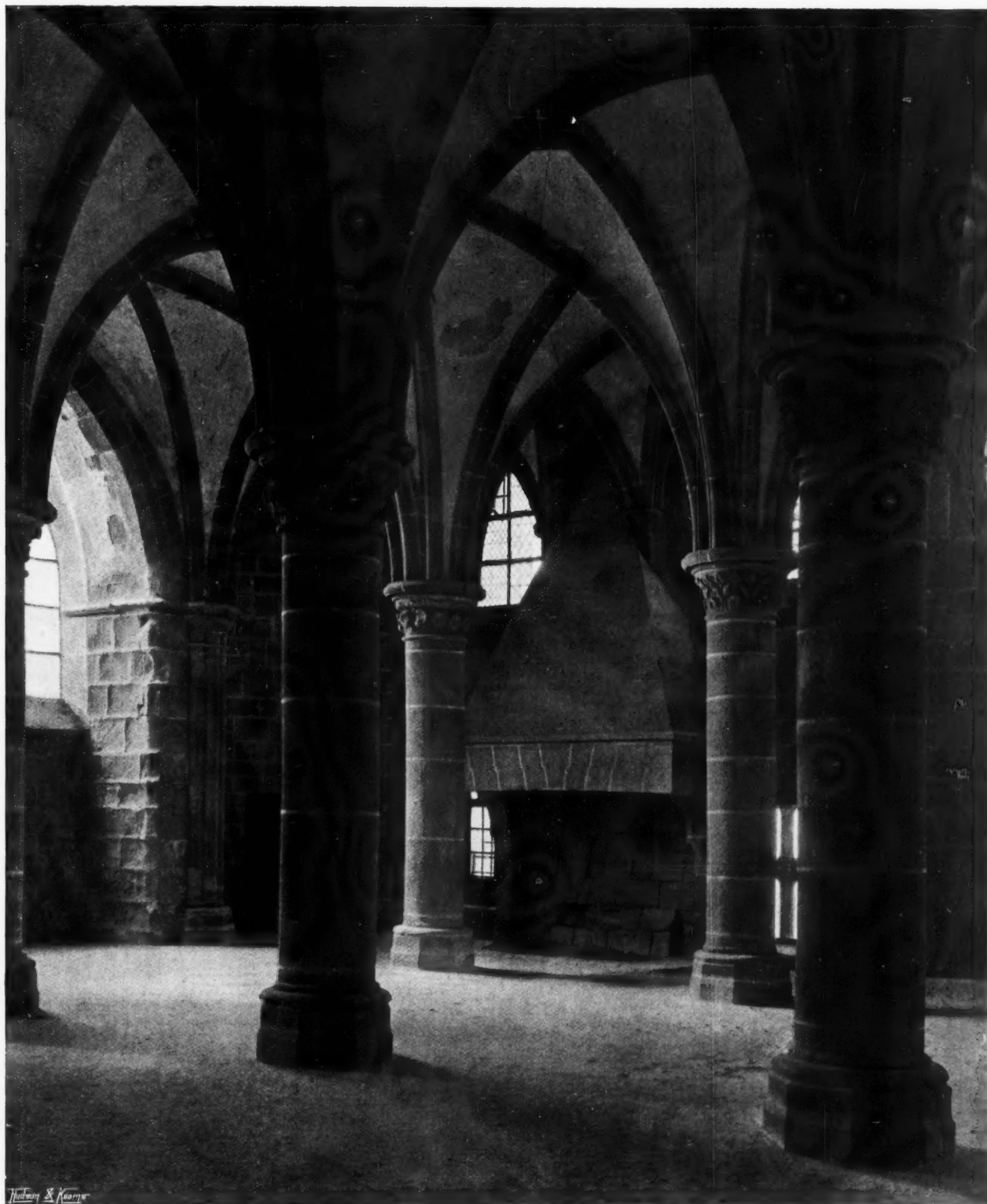
"COUNTRY LIFE."

indicating why the hall on the east of, and at the same level as, the cloister must be the refectory and can be nothing else.

Though its size and ventilation are in accord with the principles on which abbey dormitories were built, its position is not. This would naturally be above the Promenoir des Moines near the west end of the church, where the dormitory was originally placed in order to allow the monks easy access from their beds to the night services of the church. Moreover, the site of the refectory near the cloister follows the usual plan, as may be seen at Silvacane (Bouches du Rhône), Bonport (Eure), Beauport (Côtes du Nord), Léhon (Ile et Vilaine), St. Martin des Champs (Paris), Noirlac (Cher), or Fontevault (Maine et Loire), to name no others. Further, the lighting of

this hall at Mont St. Michel is not appropriate to a sleeping apartment, which usually has smaller windows, as at Mortemer, Fontaine-Guérard, or Maillezais, and generally retains traces of the small cupboard fixed near every bed, as at Lapais (Cyprus). Further, in the room at Mont St. Michel there is a charming little recess made in the embrasure of one of the long windows in which a man might sit with a good light coming over his shoulder, and his head high enough to show over the low partition. Obviously it is made for reading, and still more clearly it is so arranged that those in the hall could hear what was being read aloud to them. It does not seem appropriate to a dormitory, for in a sleeping-room no one was likely to go to the window for the sake of a view, and naturally light during sleeping hours





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FIREPLACE IN THE KNIGHTS' HALL

"COUNTRY LIFE."

would not be good enough for reading. Yet this is most certainly a "chaire" or reading desk, and it served that purpose here; for the monks had passages from "The Fathers" read to them while they ate in the refectory, so that no time should be lost in their life's task of Biblical instruction, and that unseemly conversation might be avoided while they met together to support their frail bodies for yet further toil in spiritual exercises. Curiously enough, a reading chair of the same kind, reached by a stone arcade in the wall, may still be seen, used as a pulpit, in the parish church of Beaulieu, which is formed of the refectory of the Cistercian Abbey now in the possession of Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, near the New Forest.

The cloister is the last building in the "Merveille" to which I need draw particular attention, for it is only typical portions of this immense mass of masonry on the mount that I can here describe. But this cloister is almost the final note in that strong gamut of architectural harmony which the composition of these mighty buildings has evoked. Once more we find that the logical, common-sense solution of a constructive problem has

produced a decorative effect so fine that it might well be imagined this lovely quadrangle was built on firm ground within the parvis of some cathedral in a plain, and built with sole regard to ornament and beauty. The open space within is laid with sheets of lead, instead of being turfed with grass, and this is the first reminder we have that the cloister really stands above the Salle des Chevaliers, and the Cellier de Montgomerie, as the integral part of a large and complicated building. This is one of the most complete, as it is one of the most curious, cloisters in France, and the first detail in it to which the visitor's attention should be turned is the arrangement of the colonnettes that bear the graceful, pointed arches all round its four sides. From the inside of the central space these arches do not at first seem very extraordinary, though the beautiful effect of shadow on the springing of the inner rib-vaults is intensified by the light upon the masonry outside them. But, if you go to one corner and look down the line of slender pillars, you will find they are not merely arranged in pairs, one opposite the other. The whole construction is built in a series of tripods

or triangles. The capitals are simple rings, just large enough to hold and embrace the elements they carry; and the plain

columns are only just strong enough for the weight they have to bear. This is essential to avoid too great a pressure on the walls of the Salle des Chevaliers below. The only carving is the finely undercut series of spandrels, composed sometimes of figures and sometimes of flowers. The advance in French architecture could nowhere be better exemplified than by the contrast between the nave of the abbey church and its choir. Between the dates when these were built came the thirteenth century, perhaps the most extraordinary epoch of architectural development the world has ever seen; and what it meant may be best appreciated by a careful comparison between the pillars and vaulting of this apse and the columns to the west of them. I have only space here to add that the upper church was linked to the Abbot's lodging by a wooden bridge, and that the crypt (or Gros Piliers) was similarly connected by means of the fortified stone bridge that crosses the great entrance stairway, and was originally finished off with a line of crenellated battlements along the top.

The little town that climbs uphill from the sea towards the abbey church is itself full of interest, and would be worth a visit if the sole building it contained were the Museum, where some most interesting carvings and armour may be examined. The principal town gate opens on the sands at the west, and in the court known as "l'Avancée" are still preserved the English bombards captured in 1434. Two more gates have to be passed—the "Barbican" and the "Porte du Roi"—before you are in "the street"—the only street that Mont St. Michel boasts. The oldest houses still preserve their ancient names—the Royal

Sun, the Golden Head, the Three Kings, the Cockle Shell, the Black Head, the White Pigeon, the Four Sons of Aymon, and the house where

Tiphaine, wife of Bertrand du Guesclin, once lodged. From here you may go round about the bulwarks and mark well the towers thereof; and there is no better place in which to dream about their history. Some of their most important happenings I have already indicated. It is only possible here to suggest a very little more of all they represent after the days when English Harold visited the Mount St. Aubert sanctified; when Norman Henry, second of his name upon the throne of England, held his Court here to receive the Bretons' homage; when Guy de Thouars burnt the "City of Books" that Robert of Thorigny had embellished; and when Philip Augustus aided in the building of the "Merveille," that is the Mount's chief glory.

After the English had taken Tombelaine, and all the coastwise towns, in 1372, Mont St. Michel still held out alone against all the attacks of Harry V.'s captains from 1417, soon after Agincourt, to 1423; and again from 1434 until the English were finally turned out of France, after the martyrdom of Joan of Arc in Rouen. It was in 1366 that Bertrand du Guesclin left his wife within the inviolate walls of Mont St. Michel, and his is one of the greatest of the many heroic figures that have trod its stone-shod walks. It may well have been largely owing to his inspiration that Pierre le Roy, Abbot in 1386, completed the defences with the Tour des Corbins, the Tour Perrine, the Tour Claudine and the Chatelet. Only six years before that date the mighty Constable had died beneath the walls of Châteauneuf-le-

Randon; and his is the only corpse to which an English garrison ever surrendered. They laid the keys of the town upon his coffin.



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VAULTING IN THE CLOISTER.

"C.L."

After Agincourt, when the daring of the English invaders had notably increased, the strategical value of Mont St. Michel had become proportionately greater. In those days the little river Couesnon flowed to the east of the Mount and joined the streams of the Genets, the Sée, and the Sélune, which together formed a useful barrier between the French abbey-fortress and the English Tombelaine. Du Guesclin had placed a great barrier-stone upon the banks of Couesnon, with the arms of Brittany on its western face, and of Normandy on the east. And now the river has changed its course, and flows to the west

English blockading fleet was scattered by a storm; but Bedford sent up an army of 12,000 men under Lord Scales, and the Earls of Suffolk and Salisbury. The famous Dunois, however, broke through the English lines, and brought the Mount timely reinforcements of soldiery and provisions, staying near it until he was recalled to support the campaign of Joan of Arc. But his successor was strong enough to beat off Sir Nicholas Burdett, and take him prisoner, and the Bishop of Malo's ships ran the blockade of the English investing fleet, and brought more help to the indomitable garrison. Charles VII. himself showed his



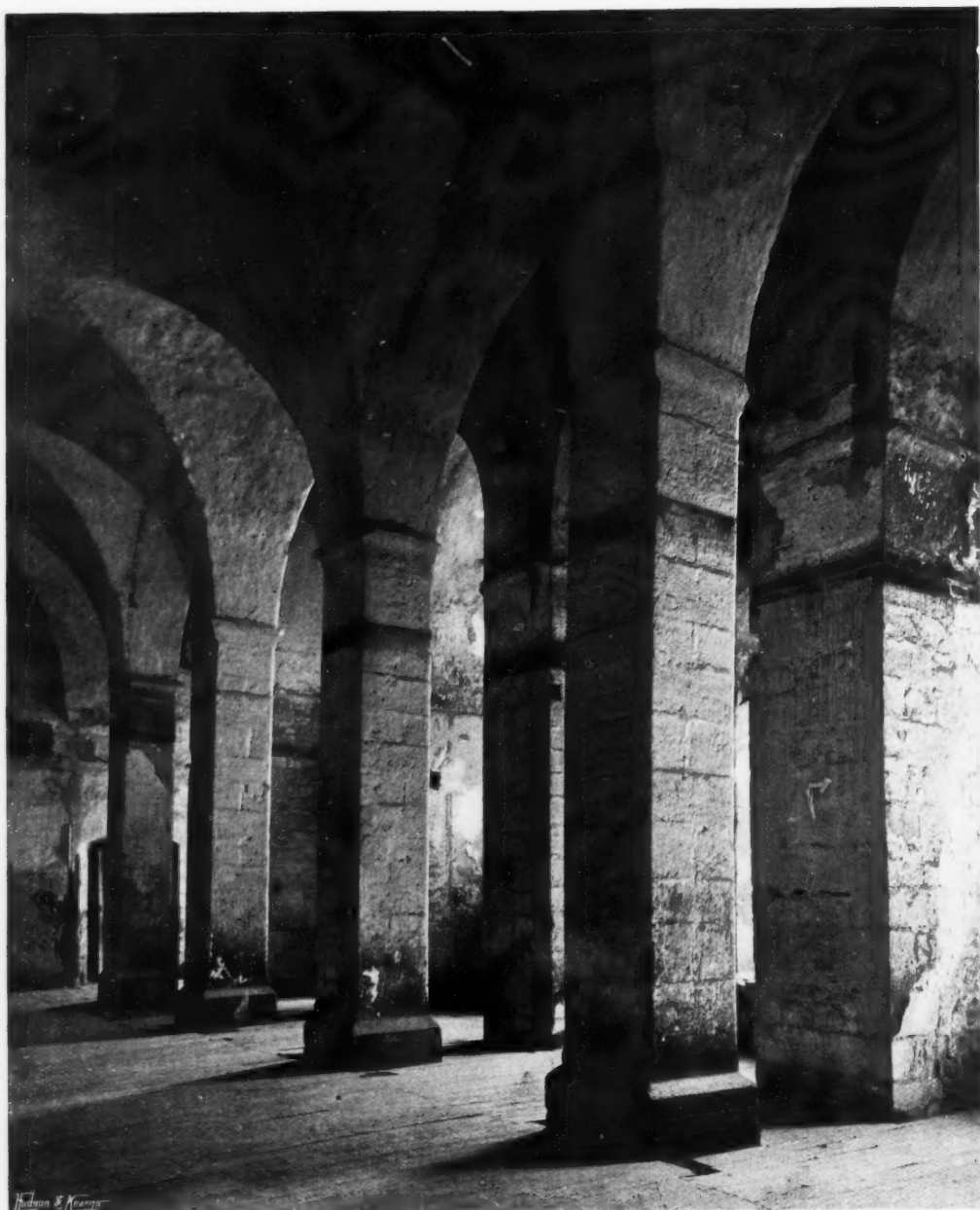
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THE SALLE DES HOTES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

of the Mount; it is still the dead Constable's decision that dominates the vagaries of terrestrial geography. But even the old course of the stream was not sufficient protection in 1419. Robert Jolivet, the Abbot, had Jean d'Harcourt as his captain of the garrison, the lieutenant-general of Normandy, Anjou, Touraine and Maine; and when Jolivet "went over to the English," Jean Gonault took his place, and held out harder than ever in 1420. The Duke of Bedford besieged it both by land and sea. But the Abbot pawned the Abbey plate, and kept on raising more soldiers and getting in more food. In 1423 the

interest in the defence by granting the Abbot permission to coin his own money, and by sending Louis d'Estouteville to be captain of the garrison. Under this new leader a final and tremendous effort was made by all the country-side to free the Mount of its attackers, and the 119 knights came in to its defence whom I have already mentioned in speaking of the Salle des Chevaliers. Their names have all been preserved to this day, and their total strength in men-at-arms amounted to 833 soldiers, who held the Mount in 1429 against nearly 10,000 English, under Lord Scales and Lord Somerset, the Governor of Tombelaine, whose great attack



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THE CELLAR.

"C.L."

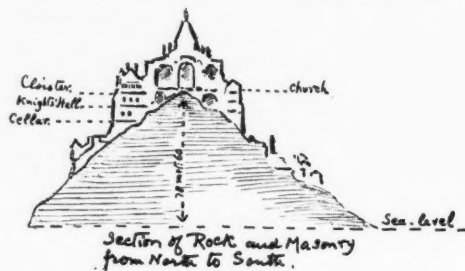
was delivered in 1434, when the famous bombards were captured, and the invaders were forced back to Torigni-sur-Eure. In 1444 the English lost the help of their traitor, Jolivet, who was among those responsible for the murder of Joan of Arc. Six years afterwards, their defeat at Formigny drove the English out of Normandy, and the Hundred Years' War was over. The heroism with which the garrison of the Mount had kept its sacred soil inviolate was worthily commemorated by the foundation of the Order of Saint Michael by Louis XI. in 1469.

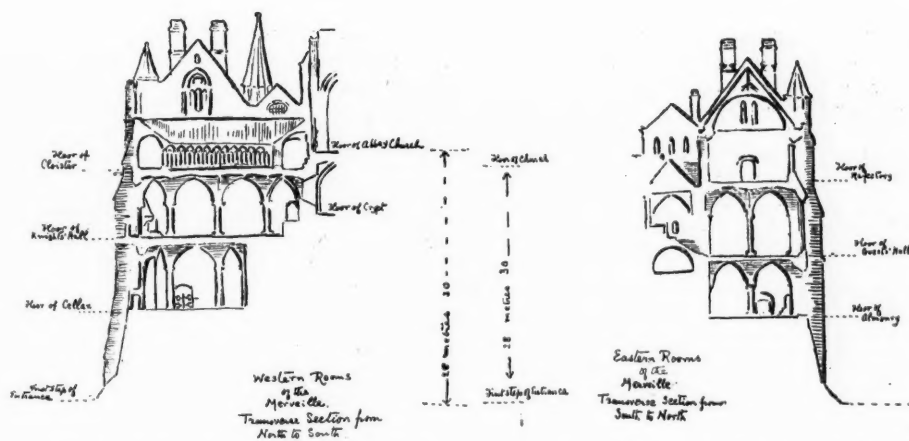
Many other Royal visitors came to this militant sanctuary as the years passed on, Francis I., Charles IX. and Henry III. among them. The horrors of the Religious Wars left it far from scatheless, as we have seen already in the Cellier de Montgomerie. Just before that tragic episode another Huguenot had endeavoured to get in by surprise, with results almost equally disastrous. Some of his soldiers, disguised, and with their weapons hidden, penetrated as far as the great platform of the Abbey itself, and disarmed several of the sentinels in the Salle des Gardes. But they were too impatient, and when they saw their leader galloping across the sand they shouted from the parapet that "the place was taken." The town garrison instantly rushed to the gates and shut them in the horsemen's faces, and his soldiers had to quit the town next morning, thankful enough that they had only to leave their armour and their arms behind them. In 1622 a congregation of Benedictines from Saint-Maur replaced the monks who for so long had served St. Michael's Abbey; and, as we have seen, the change did little good to the old buildings. But the most terrible addition to them was that of the dungeons, which first gained a hideous notoriety by the imprisonment of Victor de la Castagne (known as Dubourg) by Louis XIV., in 1745. Noël Beda, a theologian, had preceded him in these horrible subterranean cells in 1520, and the poet

Desroches followed him, apparently for satirising the Pompadour. The famous "iron cage" was condemned by the Comte d'Artois in 1777, but was only destroyed by the order of the Duc de Chartres (afterwards Louis-Philippe), who came here with Mme. de Genlis. She describes, in moving terms, the distress of the concierge at losing so profitable a source of income. In 1789 the monks were finally driven out, and the Revolutionary Government celebrated the era of freedom and fraternity, on what they christened the "Mont Libre," by filling its rooms to suffocation with three hundred imprisoned priests from all the neighbouring dioceses. This was another blow to the architecture of the place. But in 1874 the Abbey was made a "Monument Historique," and its preservation by the State was henceforth assured. The care of one capable architect after another, from M. Corroyer to M. Petitgrand, and then to M. Paul Gout, has finally given to the world a strengthened and restored Mont St. Michel, of which all France is justly proud. Whether in its history or in its amazing architectural achievement, it would be difficult to equal it in any other country.

To my mind the chief glory of the Mount is the "Merveille," and it is worth while returning to its problems for a moment in order to make them clearer to the traveller who is simply confused, at first, by the mass of complicated masonry through which he walks. It is the best example I know of the logical combination of religious life with military necessities, which is the chief characteristic of the whole place. It was built in twenty-five years and was finished in 1228, in continued realisation

of the plans laid down by Hildebert, afterwards carried out by Jourdain, Raoul des Isles, Thomas des Chambres and Raoul de Villedien, who were the abbots respectively responsible for carrying out work designed by monks under their rule. This mountain of hewn stone it was that at last permitted the community to have a cloister on the same level as their abbey church. The visitor who walks from one to the other to-day can scarcely realise that the church is built upon the very pinnacle of the rock, and that the cloister to the north of it is the topmost storey of a gigantic series of apartments which grow larger and larger as one floor rises above the other; for the whole building is in the shape of an inverted and truncated wedge, with the narrow part at the bottom on the outer buttresses of granite rock, and the upper part gradually broadening towards the apex of the pinnacle of the Mount. The "accidents" of Nature have rarely been so boldly fashioned to the needs of man, and they have evoked a creation which is characteristic not only of this spot, but of the best school of architecture known in France. I have tried to make a rough plan which will make these matters clearer to the reader who is willing to accept what is not supposed to be the work of an architectural draughtsman. It will, at least, explain that which it is difficult to express in words.





The north façade of this "Merveille" presents a spectacle of the most imposing majesty and strength as seen from the sea; and its appeal is made through solid buttresses that rise from solid ground to hold the vaults within; through openings in the massive walls adjusted for the convenience of lighting the apartments they contain; through the juxtaposition of blank spaces and more or less decorated masonry without an inch of superfluous ornament, without a yard of stone that is not necessary to the complete design. This means that the powerful attraction exercised by this prodigious building as a whole is due to no unessential tricks of subtle craftsmanship, but to the impression inevitably conveyed by the masterly accomplishment of a logical and splendid task, by the sense of just proportion between all the elements which make up the full conception; by the application of a sincere and reasoned and practically experienced skill to the development of structural problems encountered in carrying out a harmonious and spiritual ambition. The mere size of this whole mighty block of building makes the necessity for just proportion all the more vital. There must be no sense of exaggerated bulk, no suspicion of unnecessary or dangerous weakness. Each set of apartments had to be reckoned with not for itself alone, but as a portion of the whole, as placed above or below another set of masonry. Each tier of windows had to be arranged not for the convenience only of the special halls they lighted, but as openings in a great, continuous containing wall.

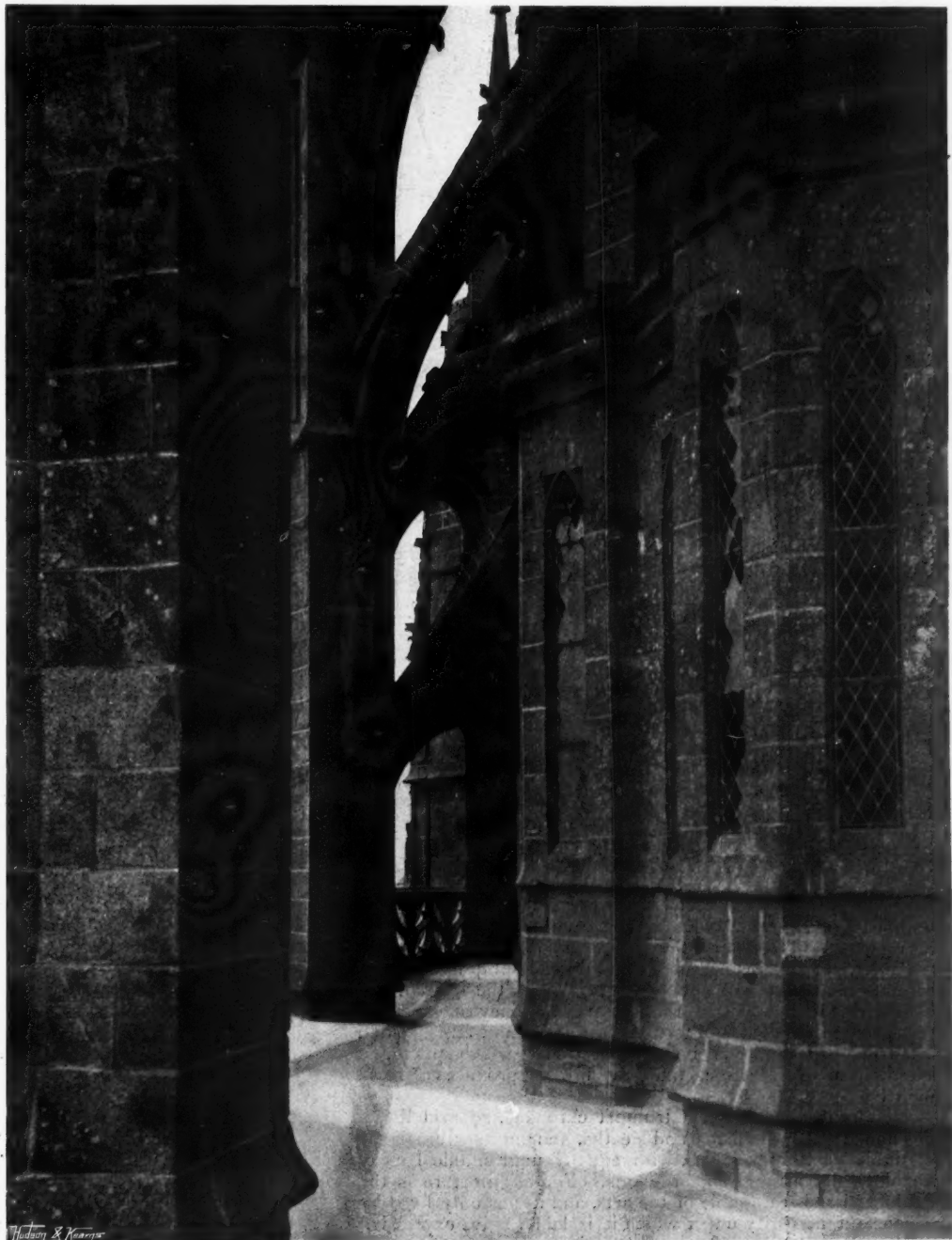
To understand the plan it is necessary to have some other guide than that of your own eyesight as you wander for the first time in what seems a daedal maze of columns, steps and buttresses, and it will be necessary to keep the points of the compass fairly clear in your mind as you move round this pinnacle of granite, or its mighty structures will convey but half their value to you. The entrance is at the east end, slightly to the north of the high altar that is within the apse, and it is guarded by the great gate of the "Grand Châtelet," with its huge semi-cylindrical pilasters, like a pair of giant cannon, on each side of the door. This is part of the building called the "Bellechaise," which clasps the south-eastern angles of the Mount, beginning with its "Salle du Guet" and "Salle des Gardes," with the six stages of the "Tour Perrine,"

and ending with the Abbot's lodgings. Above the Salle des Gardes is the "Salle du Gouvernement" for justice and for common meetings; and above the other part are buildings applied to the same purposes as those beneath them, for the lodgment of the garrison and of the Abbot.

The west end of the church is now truncated by the loss of three vaults of the original nave, and desecrated by a hideous west front patched on to the gap by tasteless builders of the eighteenth century; but beneath it, and further out upon the slope of the rock, on the same lowest level as that on which I began to describe the eastern buildings, is the old crypt called the "Aquilon," with subterranean dungeons still further

to its south and west. Above the "Aquilon" is the "Promenade des Moines," which is flanked on its southern side by the crypt of the old nave, and more prisons are above the lower dungeons.

The rude and solitary shrines that had sufficed for the first hermits who penetrated Europe from the East had expanded both in size and dignity as the fashion of monasticism spread from Monte Cassino to the West. The rules of the communities of St. Benedict are perhaps the most striking historical fact in the Middle Ages; and that they responded to a general need is obvious both from the sincerity and from the durability of their



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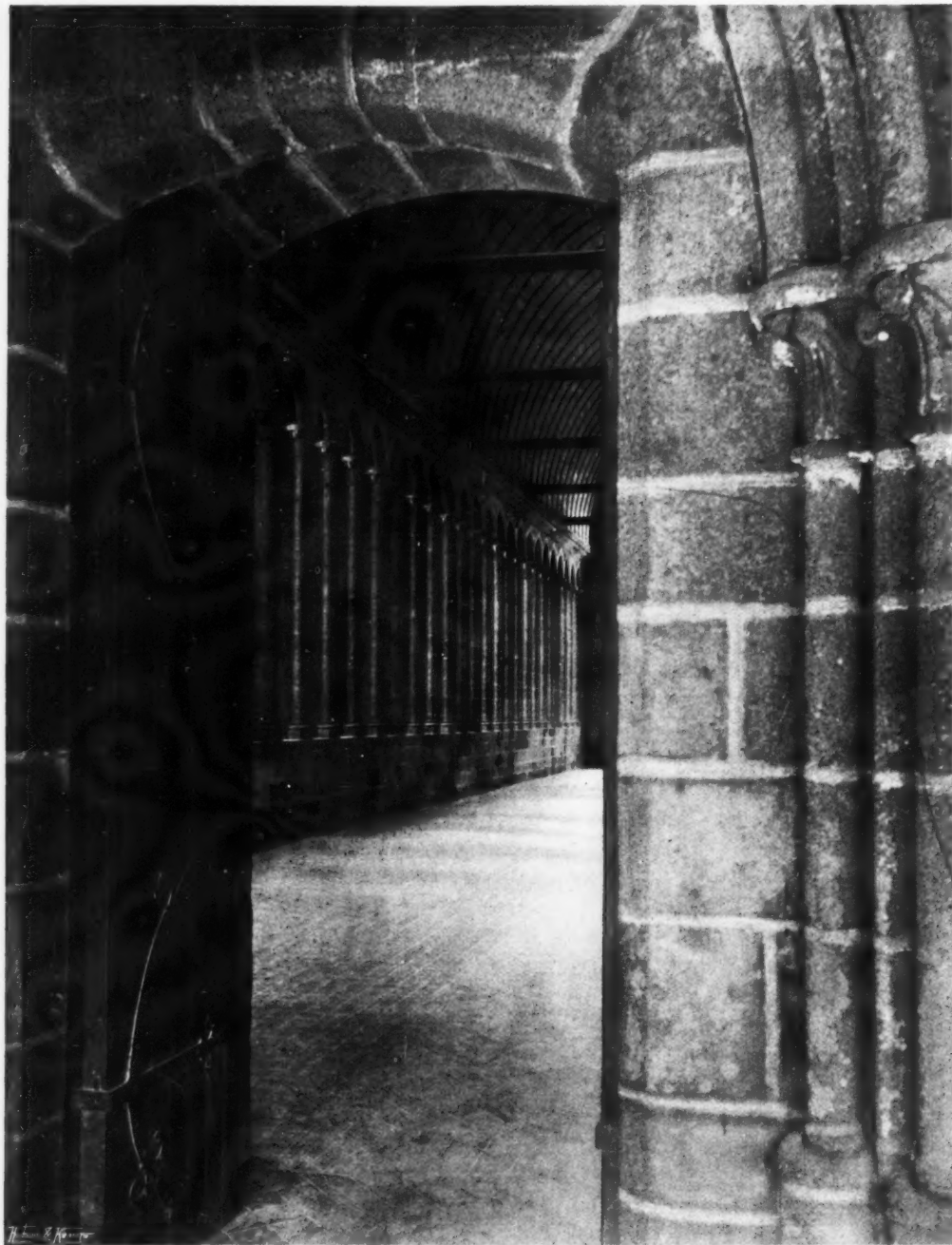
BUTTRESSES OF THE APSE; DETAIL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

results. They may at first have arisen not only from motives of a purely religious ascetism, but from the most human desire for a mere refuge from a world that was in travail with new births, in pain from constant wars and terrors. The miserable inhabitants of many a desolated district welcomed these quiet, steadfast visitors who made their own home safe and opened to every sufferer those charitable doors that were closed before the wicked or the heretic, however great his wealth, however high his birth. The newcomers brought with them, too, besides their faith and charity the sure hope of betterment in the near future, for their

because certain practical possibilities of construction either diminish or increase. They are not, as in other arts, the results of independent ideals that can be realised apart from practical considerations; and, therefore, a great building like Mont St. Michel—abbey, fortress and church in one—reflects the history of the various ages which erected it in a manner which would be impossible in the product of any other art. We admire the Elgin Marbles, or "King Lear," not because the age of Pericles produced the one and the age of Elizabeth the other, but because their perfection is a thing apart from their creators—is not the

privilege of one age, but for all time. In one aspect Mont St. Michel also appeals to us because the answer given by its many builders to the problems first set in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries remains equally interesting to the twentieth. Its beauty, in fact, is also "for all time"; but it is so for a different reason from that which consecrates the marbles of the Parthenon, and the reason is to be found not only in that vital quality of creative architectural growth to which I have already alluded, but also in the facts of human history, of human joys and sorrows of which these stones have been the scene. We cannot divorce them from the multitudinous happenings of their long and varied life. We cannot consider them coldly as so many buttresses, rooms or archways in a given arrangement. They frame the abbey founded by the Bishop of Avranches at the bidding of St. Michael, the slayer of the infernal Dragon, the protector of the dead; the abbey "in peril of the sea" that sent ships to help William of Normandy, Conqueror of England; the abbey that defied, alone on all those seagirt coasts, the pride and power of the conqueror of Agincourt. We cannot see those mighty pillars beneath the eastern apse without remembering who set them steadfast in their place. We cannot pass up the winding path towards the Châtelet without hearing the armed echo of Du Guesclin's tread before us. We cannot penetrate from the almonry into the vaults beyond without seeing those wide uneven floors all slippery with the blood of Montgomery's betrayed and butchered soldiers. So that the whole rock of Mont St. Michel seems to gather up its own epitome of life upon this spot; and the



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THE REFECTORY FROM THE CLOISTERS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

prayers to heavenly hierarchies were not unmixed with more material knowledge that brought happiness and comfort to men's lives on earth. Theirs was the only store then visible, outside the Palace, of the knowledge and experience of antiquity. Theirs were not only the manuscripts of the fathers of the church, but the arts of the builders of the churches. They cleared the forests, turned the course of torrents into irrigating streams, and started many a centre of industrial activity which proved a shelter far more efficacious than the broken promises of royal banditti.

History is no drum and trumpet chronicle, no arid list of kings and queens, of births and deaths, and architecture is no mere table of various styles, with equally unprofitable lists of chronologically arranged adornments. For architecture is the most logical and reasonable of the arts, and it has only lived by the constant necessity under which it is laid to give expression to the circumstances of the generation which produces it. "Styles" only change because the men who build them differ,

voice of that First Spirit in "Prometheus Unbound" seems to echo round the bay:

On a battle-trumpet's blast
I fled hither, fast, fast, fast,
Mid the darkness upward cast.
From the dust of creeds outworn,
From the tyrant's banner torn,
Gathering round me, onward borne,
There was mingled many a cry—
"Freedom!" "Hope!" "Death!" "Victory!"
Till they faded through the sky.
And one sound, above, around,
One sound, beneath, around, above,
Was moving.

If the plan and structure of the buildings on the Mount may be said to embody the architectural development of France, so its memories and associations are a no less faithful reflection of the vicissitudes of French history.

THEODORE ANDREA COOK.

FAILTE.

THEY sat together, high up on the hillside, hardly discernible among the bracken patches and granite boulders, the many-tinted mantle of the autumn moor flung before them in purple crease and tawny fold down to the shores of Loch na Veulan. Basalt rocks, blackened by many sea battles, yet mottled with deep orange lichen, lined the shore where the tidewash had left a rust-red fringe of seaweed. Striding forward from the mainland, a rugged promontory, crowned by a ruined tower, challenged the advancing waves which broke in white anger round its armoured base. The castle, like some gaunt petrified warrior, had for unrecorded centuries resisted the eternal attack of the Atlantic tide, and as grimly watched its retreat. From where they sat—the boy with his arm round the collie's neck—they could see the little grey seals at play in the bay beside the promontory and the silver flashes of the wheeling gulls against the dark rock. Southward, the coastline was again severed by the deep blue of the Sound, where the distant yachts flitted to and fro like tiny white butterflies. The boy, rousing himself from the mesmerism which such scenes must always induce in those who live with them, no less than in the traveller, turned to his companion with a caress.

"Och, Failte, I'll miss ye sair these days, an' Uncle Sandie 'ull no tak me wi' him ta Edombro'. Aiblins ye'll be the champion this time the morrow, wee doggie," and he wandered off into a language with something of the west wind in its cadence, something of the crisp rustle of bracken on the hillside and the tang of bog myrtle, and of the sea-bird's call from the lonely shore. For Failte, the collie, born not a year ago among these same hills, was of far other descent than the ordinary shepherd's companion, and was on the eve of his first appearance in the show world. A grown dog in stature and symmetry, his head, set small and shapely amid a wealth of snowy fur, had scarcely reached its full length; the firmer lines of age were absent from cheek and jaw, and something in his eyes, frank and keen in their expression, instead of restlessly alert, bespoke the puppy. To the hill-life he owed his splendid vigour of body, and it would seem that he had borrowed something of its colour as well, for his coat, not yet matured, had all the shades of autumn bracken, its deep copper and ochre streaks, its sunlit ripples of gold. Well might Davie, the lad, adore him, and Donald, the father, prize him as only the breeder and exhibitor can.

And here a word about Donald, a man of sober habit and sound judgment, known for a good breeder of kye and stout Highland galloway, a man too well educated to ignore the matter of points, yet too canny to put points before practice, for if the former represented his interest, the latter was his capital. This gospel he had often preached to Sandie, his younger brother, a dog fancier down in Glasgow, whose collies brought him fair renown and a fluctuating income. It was at the great show where Sandie's Redgauntlet had proved himself Scotland's champion, and had carried home the challenge shield for good and all, along with a caseful of cups and quaichs, that Donald, sauntering round the benches with a great thumb in either buttonhole, and a scent about his homespun coat that disarmed even the snappiest West Highland exhibit—Donald, towering gently above a tangled knot of excited collie men, argued the possibility of a "shaw-dog" who could work, a sheepdog who could win—the Admirable Crichton not yet achieved in "colliedom." The Sassenach fanciers, men from London and Lancashire, shook their heads; the latter had worked thorough-breds but not champions. Heredity was sadly in the way. Twenty generations of idleness had robbed these sable Cæsars and tricolor tyros of their rightful instincts. The "Shepherd Kings" had become "Rois Fainéants." Greyhound and Gordon setter had cast a point or two; inbreeding, to produce type, had done the rest, and these narrow heads belied inductive minds. Donald challenged the last—this Redgauntlet, for instance—a silly face on him, to be sure, and a neb like a crane; but a skull eleven by four would hold just as much brain stuff as one measuring eight by five whatever, which would be more like his ain Nall at hame, she who had never been bet in the sheep trials from Arran eastward, and only a three year auld. Then, jerking a big thumb at Redgauntlet's bench, where the tawny champion slept beneath a roseate halo of award cards, he added: "Yon dawg's nae born fule, whatever Sandie's made o' him, an' A reckon him an' ma Nall wad as like as no produce a varra fair all-round competitor—gin t' were 'partly baith!'"

Nell, faithful, indefatigable, and true to the loyal instinct of her duty, worked out her season on the hillside—a trifle slower than of wont, maybe, towards the last, prone to ignore old "louns," and with a sharpened remembrance of short cuts. "Puir Nall's walkin' saircumspactly, A doot," said Donald's gude-wife, setting a frothy bowl of new milk by the door one evening in October. When the first blue-white snows reached the mountain ridge that sheltered Donald's farmstead from the

East, and the last black-faced sheep had been gathered from the far beats to the low ground, Nell plainly hinted she had other matters on hand, and Donald and old dog Jock sorted the herds without her. Lying much beneath the kitchen settle, dreaming dreams of tawny heroes, she would also pay frequent surreptitious visits to that end of the old byre where the last cartload of late meadow hay had been stored. Softly she would cross the yard, soft purpose in her eye, and when Donald and his boy Davie entered unawares and came upon her busily burrowing in the still fragrant grass, she immediately sprang to the further corner of the byre and pointed steadily at a rat hole in the cobbled floor.

"Nall's after raats, father," quoth little Davie, whereat the other smiled and echoed "Raats!" and that night the gude-wife set Nell's supper inside the byre door. Next morning, Davie, missing her by the kitchen fire, went shouting and whistling about the yard, and finally, keeking into a dark corner in the hay byre, came suddenly to close quarters with gleaming white teeth and a low growl. Other sounds followed, small, struggling, half smothered and vastly complaining pipes, but it was not till next day that Nell appeared at the kitchen door with urgent invitation to follow and behold. Now, though Nell herself was a tricolor—that is to say, she had a dense coat of glossy black, a white ruff and four white feet, and a wise tan patch over each eye and on either cheek—yet her two sons and one daughter were one and all sable and white as the snow on the hillside. Uncle Sandie, coming home for the New Year, cast his vote in favour of the smaller dog. All were a good size, but later the big brother failed to get his ears up, and their slack carriage proved an outward and visible sign of his phlegmatic disposition. He was fit for neither work nor show, but soon found his vocation as a lady's pet. His sister (Gypsy they called her for her tawny face) possessed all the electricity he lacked, in addition to her own charge; she was a fair specimen of the long, lean-faced anxious-eyed V.H.C. type, but her sole notion of work was fuss and frenzy and noise insuppressible—all Nell's virtuous activity perverted, in fact. In the third puppy, whose points had won Sandie's praise, Donald noted early the signs and wonders he looked for so eagerly, and christened him Failte. From earliest spring days Failte would always try to follow him when he climbed the brae to count the lambs, scrambling business-like by Nell's side, and many a time proud Davie, fondly scolding, would carry the puppy home. In May, Failte being six months old, over distemper and as big as Nell herself, Donald decided to let him learn his trade on the hills. By August it was a pretty sight to see mother and son work an unwilling herd of black-faces down the burn to the sheepwash, where Donald awaited them with dripping, bare arms. In September, Failte brought home trophies from the neighbouring sheep trials, and was only second to his own mother at Arran, while at all local shows he walked over. The whole country-side envied Donald, and watched his "expeiriment" with deep interest as the short golden October days wore on to the Edinburgh fixture, where Failte was to make his real *début* in the show world. The dates fell a week short of his first birthday, which doubled his opportunities, and there were half-a-dozen entries to his name. Sandie arrived a few days before the show to fetch and "fettle him up," with sundry stripping combs and secret washes, for the coat was his speciality.

"*Facile princeps in puppy class, primus inter pares in dogs*" was his admiring prophecy.

"Aye—he'll bang the lot," answered Donald, who had no dealings with dead languages. "Here, Davie lad, awa' up the hill wi' Failte, for he'll be getting no exercise the next three days at all." So, after scouring the hillside for an hour with joyous shout and bark, the two sat them down to rest, as we have seen, on the bracken ridge. Five hundred feet below them lay the white coach road winding from the south, now lost behind a ridge, now reappearing, as the ground rose or fell. It was from one of these distant, threadlike stretches that Failte heard a faintly-increasing murmur, and that Davie, following his eye, espied a swiftly gathering cloud of dust arise.

"Whist! Yon's a great caur. Awa' down to see it gang by," he cried; and with headlong leaps and bounds they reached the roadside in time to see the motor round the corner of the Castle Rock. A "great caur" it was indeed, scarlet as sin, and travelling at the pace usual in districts where a tinker in twenty miles is an event. To Davie the occupants appeared as two goggled ghouls in front, two shrouded, swaying mummies behind. Where he stood, with Failte at his heels, there was a little dip and rise in the road, and, as the car approached them, changing gear, it emitted a sudden beast-like snarl of anger. And Failte, the puppy, cowering behind Davie at the coming horror of smoke and smell, became on a sudden the guardian dog, defender of his master's son. With a shriek of fury he sprang at the monster—they closed in deadly conflict—snarl and shriek mingled for a second; then the motor, without slackening speed,

whirled on out of sight and ken. One of the shrouded swaying figures stood up and looked back through dust and din at the stark gold patch on the roadway and the kilted lad kneeling beside it.

Thus Failte took his Championship.

MILLCENT VON BOESELAGER.

FROM THE FARMS.

SUPERVISION OF SMALL HOLDINGS IN FRANCE.

AMONG the many interesting papers published as an appendix to the Small Holdings Report there is an account of the Bill presented to the French Parliament on January 31st, 1905, which is valuable as showing what the most thoughtful French statesmen think ought to be the safeguards of the small holding. The Bill, it should be stated, was submitted by M. Ruau, who succeeded M. Merlou as Minister of Agriculture. The three main conditions laid down are: "(1) Non-liability to seizure; (2) Comparative incapacity to mortgage; (3) Limitation of the right of disposal, in the sense that the husband can sell neither his own nor the common property without his wife's consent." The maximum value of the holding which is not to be liable to seizure is £320, consisting either of a house alone, or of a house with land attached to it. This homestead is to be free from taxation; its acquisition and transmission are to be effected without fiscal charges, and it is incapable of being mortgaged. The provision is the outcome of the experience that mortgages have proved one of the most frequent causes of ruin to small agricultural holdings in France. The objection raised against it is that it tends to diminish the credit of the proprietor, but against that it is suggested that a man's solvency should be personal and depend more on his character than his belongings. The argument has been used in favour of the system of agricultural co-operation, which has developed so largely in France of late years. The movement was started in 1884, when five syndicates came into existence, but by 1899 these had increased to 2,133, with a membership of 500,000. The work done by these agricultural syndicates is threefold. They are societies of professional protection, they act as co-operative societies, and they raise the whole standard of agriculture in the provinces. When the present Parliament brings out the Bill which has been so long promised, it is to be hoped that

advantage will be taken of the experience gained in France. We cannot adopt the same precautions here, but the principles to be kept in view are identical. If a holding is to serve its purpose, every safeguard that will tend to keep it intact must be adopted, and either by extending the system of agricultural banks, or some other means, the holder must be protected from the money-lender. The danger of subdivision is perhaps the most difficult to guard against, and yet the most fatal. The small holder who succeeds often does so by taking advantage of the working power of his family, and instead of paying them wages, creates, either in property or in money, a common fund. At his death, if this be divided, it means that several members of his family will be each credited with a property insufficient to yield a livelihood, while if it were all given to one the others would have just grounds of complaint.

THE CLEANLINESS OF HOME PRODUCE.

In the analyses of butter which we have published there is one feature which must prove of exceptional interest. It is that native butter appears to be made under much more cleanly conditions than those under which foreign butter is produced. Over the latter, it is needless to say, we possess no control whatever. The cows may be of the best, and their feeding of the best, yet nothing is more certain than that if the utmost cleanliness is not maintained in the dairy the resulting food product will be detrimental to health. Fortunately the analyst sitting in his laboratory, working with the certainty of fate and knowing nothing about the origin of the product before him, is able by his scientific methods to discover impurity wherever it occurs. He has shown us that abroad sufficient care is not taken to ensure the cleanliness of the water in which the butter is washed, and that other precautions of a similar kind are systematically neglected. The other day the present writer, discussing this matter with one of our most famous medical experts, was told that this lack of control over foreign food supplies was a matter directly affecting Englishmen. He gave as an example those who dine even at our very best hotels and eating-houses. It is a commonplace to say that in the morning they often suffer from nausea, sickness and kindred ailments. Of course, it is often said in a cynical way that the champagne or the salad is to blame; but the expert referred to said that his experience was that absolute teetotallers suffered just as much as those who partook of wine, and his conclusion, given without any hesitation, was that many of the foreign materials used in preparing meals for English customers



S. E. Wall,

THE RETURN IN THE GLOAMING.

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are contaminated. He is decidedly of the opinion that those who have any regard for the stomachs of their guests, unless under very exceptional circumstances indeed, should take care that the food is of English origin, unless it can be demonstratively shown that a better quality of food can be obtained from abroad. In the case of butter our analyst has proved that this is an absurdity. There is no butter made in any other part of the world equal to the best which we produce; and if we come to the cheaper butters, price for price, that which is made in England will be found superior to that which comes from abroad. Moreover, the very circumstances demand that the latter should be used with some sort of preservative. Very frequently salt is added to hide defects of making, and the quantity of salicylic acid which a British householder unwittingly consumes with his food is beyond estimate.

THE AGRICULTURAL ORGANISATION SOCIETY.

This society has just issued a report embracing a period of eighteen months ending June 30th, 1906. In it it is recalled that the systematic promotion of Agricultural Co-operative Societies in Great Britain dates from 1900—that is to say, from the establishment of the British Agricultural Organisation Society. Previous to that there had been some sporadic attempts of the kind, but then was the first organised effort. The progress of the movement is shown by a table. In April, 1901, there were 12 societies, but in December, 1905, there were 123. The total receipts for 1905 amounted to £2,627 13s. 8d., and the total expenditure to £2,476 18s. 3d. Among other work done by the society the following are to be numbered: The sale of livestock by the Winchcombe Co-operative Auction Mart; the sale of pigs by the Eastern Counties Farmers Co-operative Association; the sale of fruit by the Hereford Co-operative Fruit-grading Society; the sale of butter by several Welsh societies; the retail distribution of milk by the Walkden Farmers' Milk Supply Association; the co-operative ownership of manure distributors by several societies; the experimental plots established in connection with the Clophill and District Agricultural Co-operative Society; and the proposed establishment of a co-operative jam factory at Toddington. Undoubtedly the Agricultural Organisation Society has abundance of scope for action. According to the latest reports from the Board of

Agriculture, the industry has not been so flourishing during the past twelve months as could have been wished. We are constantly being inundated with letters pointing out that chickens, eggs and dairy produce still come from abroad to this country in quantities that are something of a disgrace to those engaged in the work at home. If the body we speak of can organise the workers and bring producers and sellers together, it will have earned the right to a high place among useful public bodies.

DEEP CULTIVATION AND DROUGHT.

Last summer scarcely a drop of rain fell for weeks in many districts; in fact, over a wide area there was almost a water famine, which, it is needless to remark, told greatly against the production of sweet, crisp vegetables, and more especially was this the case where the soil was shallow and resting on a gravelly subsoil. No one knows what the coming summer may be. It may be another one of prolonged drought, and most trying to the gardener in keeping up a good supply of produce; so that, as far as lies in our power, we should take time by the forelock and make preparations to counteract the influence of what might prove practically destructive to plant-life. Shallow soils which have been sparingly manured, and what might be called surface-dug year after year, are the first to suffer from drought, and they will never improve so long as this class of treatment is practised. Trenching the land 2ft. deep, breaking up the subsoil (not necessarily to bring the bottom to the surface) and placing two good layers of manure in each trench as the work proceeds, will do a deal to ensure the growing of good vegetables, even should the season prove dry and the water supply run short. At this season of the year, when the land is clear of crops, I would strongly advise, as far as labour will permit, trenching, or double digging, so that the future plants may root deep, and be out of the way of the parching surface. Again, those who are anxious to prepare to meet drought on shallow soils should not only trench, but make use of everything they can get hold of which is of manurial value. There is no occasion to allow the drainings from farmyard or stables to be wasted, even in midwinter. If liberally applied they will enrich and improve the land, and prove very valuable to the following crops, while on heavier land old potting materials and other gritty substances will be found to be very helpful. H. MARKHAM.

SHOOTING.

A FOURTEEN-POINTER.

IN the autumn, last year, I was camped in a small nullah in Kashmir. I had already killed a nice eleven-pointer Bara Singh stag and a good black bear; and, as my leave lasted till January, I had hopes of getting another stag when the snow fell later. The stags were still calling, and every day as I sat on some rocky point watching the grassy openings in the forest on the other side of the nullah a mile or so away, the weird sound of some stag calling would be borne to my ears. It is an uncanny sound, something between a whistle and a bellow, with the carrying power of a steam syren. Day after day the hillsides were watched with my glasses, but no fresh stag came into the nullah. There were two stags there already, a ten-pointer of some 33in., and a smaller eight-pointer. I knew them well, knew where they lay by day, where they fed and drank, so many times had I seen them; but I wanted to kill a royal, and as several months' leave were left I was content to wait.

One evening, as I was going down to my camp, after a long day on the hill, a call came from the summit of the ridge to the north. I had never seen a stag there, so knew this must be a newcomer, and sent my shikari up to look for marks next morning round three small pools of water there were on the crest of the hill there. It was sheer laziness. I ought to have gone up myself, and bitterly did I repent it afterwards. At noon the shikari came back to camp in the greatest excitement. He said he had seen a twelve-pointer stag up at one of the pools in the early morning; and from his description of the three short points at the top of either horn I thought he was probably telling the truth. He had been quite close to it, he said, so if I had not lain in bed that morning—the first time for months—I should probably have got a shot. In the evening I went up and sat on a rock from which I could see the pool; but though I could hear the stag calling in the thick fir jungle beyond the pool, he did not come out till it was dark. So, fearing he might possibly get my wind while I could not see to count his points, I went back along the ridge and, wrapping a blanket round me, slept out under the stars. In the morning I was by the pool before daylight, but the stag went into the jungle before it was light enough to see him. I could tell, however, from the size of the marks in the soft mud by the pool that he was a good stag. For the next week I slept up on the hill and watched the pool and the hill near it from the first streak of dawn till dark, but never caught a glimpse of the stag. He came nightly to drink and roll in the water, as I could see from the fresh marks each morning, and from his calling, which I could hear as I ate my supper before going to sleep. Hinds I saw

in plenty with their pretty playful fawns. They had no fear, and came out as soon as the sun had sunk behind the hill opposite. But the old stag was too wary, and never left the jungle before dark. One evening on my way back along the ridge in the dark to my sleeping-place, I heard some animal snuffling on the path ahead of me. The wind was right and I thought it was a hind who had heard me, trying to get my wind. It was too dark to see, and I was hungry, so went on. A startled roar made my heart jump, as a big bear went crashing off down the hill. The idea of it being a bear had never entered my head. It was extremely lucky for me that he bolted, as bears, when suddenly disturbed at close quarters, are apt to be short-tempered and attack one. On the ninth day I put a man to watch the pool from the place where I usually sat, while I myself went a few hundred yards beyond it, to the other side of a small hill, thinking perhaps he might come out there before visiting the water. This ridge was only some 20yds. broad at its crest, with steep slopes running down on either side for miles. One slope was covered with dense pine jungle, in which the stag lived, and the other was bare, rocky and precipitous. On the way back to my bivouac I had to pass close to the pool. I left my place at dark and was approaching the pool when the call of a stag from in front made me pause. I could make out a dark mass near the pool, which was now some hundred yards away, but it was much too dark to see what it was. I came nearer, and another loud call showed me that it was the stag. I had not yet seen him myself to count his points; besides, it might not be the same stag, so shooting was out of the question. He was between me and my supper, so I had to get round somehow. I tested the wind and found it was blowing from the wooded slope towards the precipitous one. So very cautiously I tried to crawl past him. I could not go far down the slope, as it was too steep. I had just got past him, and was congratulating myself on having outwitted him, when he gave a loud bark, and rushed headlong into the jungle. How I cursed myself for having risked passing him; how I wished I had slept, supperless, where I was; for I knew well that an old stag thus disturbed on his feeding-ground is apt to change his quarters. When I got back to my bivouac the man I had left to watch the pool told me that the stag had come out an hour at least before dark. It had never entered his head that he could have made a big detour down into the nullah climbed up on the other side and warned me. The next day I found that my fears were correct. The stag was gone, and though I stayed up for another week, he was not seen again. I had got to know the note of his call, so could tell that he had gone down to a knoll in the next nullah a mile or so away. This

nullah was occupied by another sportsman, and my hopes fell to zero. I was just going to give it up, when news came that the other Sahib had left his nullah and marched off to another part after bear. It did not take long to get down to the place where I had heard my stag calling; and before evening I had found a small, grassy opening in the jungle where he had fed every night since he left. I also found the path he left the jungle by, and sat down on a rock just over his path to wait. The jungle from which I expected the stag to come was on my left, and there was a big pine right against me on that side, which screened me from observation, but prevented my seeing anything coming along the path till it was right under me. When the sun had just gone down behind the hill I heard a stick break in the jungle to my left, followed by three distinct steps on the dry leaves. Then there was silence for half-an-hour. I thought it must have been a hind, as I had not heard the sound of antlers crashing in the bushes, which one usually hears when a stag is going through jungle. Suddenly, I was aware of some beast walking on the dry bracken some 30yds. away. It was behind the tree, and so invisible; but by leaning forward as far as possible I could see that a stag was coming towards me along the path. It was impossible to make out his horns; but knowing that when he came round the tree there would be no time for anything, as he would be within 3yds., I raised my rifle to my shoulder and waited. A few seconds passed that seemed like ages, and my heart was beating wildly as the steps came nearer. Then the stag came round the tree. He was only about a gun's length off, and, catching sight of the little cup of three points on the top of either horn that marks a royal, I fired. He saw me just before I fired; I could see it in his eye. He fell dead, his hair being burnt by the powder, so close had he come. I jumped down to examine my prize while the shikari "hallalled" him (cut his throat). What was my delight to discover that he was not a royal, but an imperial—*i.e.*, a fourteen-pointer. Again and again I counted the points to be sure that there was no mistake. He was a real beauty, and I could have hugged my dirty shikari, I was so pleased. His measurements were: Length outside the curve, 39in.; point to point, 27½in.; widest inside, 32in.; widest outside, 39in.; circumference of horn, 2in. above bay; tine, 6½in. HANGUL.

WOODCOCK IN SOUTHERN COVERTS.

THE effect of the very heavy snow in the eastern parts of England was most apparent in the more Southern Counties, just after the turn of the year, in the very large numbers (speaking relatively and with reference to the normal rule of only an occasional bird of the species being seen in the coverts) of woodcock which were found by the shooters, or by the beaters, going a second or third time through the coverts. In one quite small wood in Sussex twelve were killed one day and many more seen. This is a wood in which two, or perhaps three, are about the normal number expected in a day. There

had been no remarkable abundance of the birds in the Southern coverts previous to the heavy fall which came on Christmas night and lay for the best part of a fortnight in parts of Norfolk, and there is no reasonable doubt that the snow was the cause of the dispersal of the birds from their usual haunts and their consequent plenty in places where there are but few of them in ordinary winters.

POACHING HARES WITH A LURCHER.

A fashion of poaching with which it is very difficult to contend is that of the man who drives along the roads, in a shooting country in which there are many hares, in a gig with a fast-trotting horse. He has with him a well-broken and fast lurcher. The mode of operation is as follows: When the gig passes a likely field for hares, a signal is given to the dog, who makes through the fence and courses about the field. If he is able to pounce on a hare, he comes back with it, at best pace, to the gig. The man does not pull up the horse, but the active lurcher is trained to jump into the gig, with the hare, as it goes along, and so the nefarious proceeding is consummated. Keepers and watchers, knowing the gaps by which the dog is likely to leave the field, now and then make an end of the unfortunate four-footed poacher as he returns with his spoil, and, of course, the really guilty party in the gig dares not enter any protest, or make any claim to the dog, as his so doing would convict him of participation; but it is punishment which falls on the wrong head, involving the death of the poor dog, whose only fault is his being too intelligent in his obedience to such a master, and it depends, too, on the luck of the watchers being in the right field at the right moment. The only good thing to be said about it all is that it is not a very wholesale way of poaching, but by frequent repetition it makes a considerable difference to the stock of hares.

DECREASE OF FRENCH PARTRIDGES IN EASTERN COUNTIES.

While the red-legged French partridge seems to be constantly extending his range westward in the English counties and generally to be becoming more numerous, there is no doubt whatever that in the Eastern Counties, which were the scene of his first introduction to this country, his numbers are steadily and even rapidly diminishing. There are many places now where the numbers of red legs in a day's bag are hardly in the proportion of one to ten as compared to their numbers some twenty years ago. In the meantime the numbers of the English partridges have very generally increased. The shooter of the Eastern Counties has no hesitation at all in giving you a reason for the diminution of the French birds. "They are so easy to kill when they come driven"; he will tell you at once "No one can miss an old Frenchman." A good many people are found to miss, almost unaccountably, even "an old Frenchman," but there is no doubt whatever that, generally speaking, driving must have been bad for the "red-legs" health, so that "lead poisoning" out of gun barrels has been the death of a relatively greater number of them than of the more swift English birds. The Frenchman, too, has a way of coming single, so that every shot is apt to be the death of one; he does not so often come over in a big covey, or even a pack, as do

the other birds. This, and his slow and straight-going ways, which, as used to be thought, made him so invaluable in "leading the drive," have brought death to him, and this is, perhaps, the sufficient cause of his vanishing. Yet we have a suspicion that there must be some natural causes also at work against him in these counties to bring about the decrease which we notice.



W. A. Rouch

A HOT FIVE MINUTES.

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ON THE GREEN.

THE OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE GOLFING SOCIETY.

By A. C. M. CROOME.

THE Oxford and Cambridge Golfing Society is believed, at least by University men, to be the first of its kind established in England. Like all good things, especially those which confer valuable privileges on their users, it has its prototype in Scotland, where there are many associations of golfers whose object is to play on courses kept up by others. No very extraordinary event led to the formation of the Oxford and Cambridge Golfing Society. Mr. R. H. de Montmorency, when captain of the Oxford Club in 1897, induced a number of old 'Varsity men to come up and play a match with his team, which afterwards entertained them to dinner at the

Gridiron Club. The Hincksey course had not been particularly wet, and the dinner was excellent. So when Mr. J. L. Low, replying for the visitors, said that it was a pity that similar matches could not be more frequently played, the sentiment was received with enthusiasm, and the present writer promptly offered to become secretary to a society having the arrangement of such matches as its object. And so the thing was done. A circular was sent out, and upwards of ninety men signified their intention of joining as original members. The first man to pay his entry money was Mr. H. G. Hutchinson, who had consented to be the society's first president. On the expiration of his term of office he was succeeded by the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, who has recently been re-elected for a second term. The society now numbers over 200, in spite of the committee, who do not issue their invitations lightly. Its first match, which occupied two

days, was played at Sandwich against the St. George's Club at Easter, 1898. On the first day the home team had the better of the foursomes, but the balance was more than redeemed in the singles on the second. In the autumn the society sustained the first of a series of defeats from the Oxford team. Those were the days of the Hincksey course, and—a more potent factor in the success of the University teams—there were in residence such players as Mr. Mansfield Hunter, Mr. H. C. Ellis, Mr. H. W. Beveridge, Mr. F. H. Mitchell and the late Mr. J. A. T. Bramston, whose untimely death has left such a gap among golfers. The following Easter saw the society engaged in its first Lancashire tour. Matches were played at Hoylake, Formby and St. Anne's, of which the first was lost by a small margin, and the other two won. Subsequent tours have since followed the precedent then set. Though the representatives of the society have once caught a weak team of the Royal Liverpool Golf Club napping at Westward Ho! and destroyed it, the Hoylake men have proved invincible on their own green. Once at least, if not twice, the visitors have seen their way to victory if their top men could hold Messrs. Ball, Hilton, Graham and Charles Hutchings (by the way, Mr. Janion considered them unduly optimistic); the top men have done their duty, but events have proved that the abilities of the less-known Hoylakers were under-rated. Liverpool seems prolific in flat-catching golfers, men whose putting is to be depended upon, and who, except when a crisis demands an extra good shot, are content to be there or thereabouts. Consequently Hoylake still remains a world to be conquered. Apart from the golf and the picking up of old friendships, these tours have been rendered wonderfully pleasant by the hospitality of the clubs visited. That hospitality is not limited to the dining-room, but shows itself on the green, and wherever a careful attention to details can minister to the enjoyment of the clubs' guests. Mr. Low, in speaking of the countless occasions when he has seen evidence of this self-sacrificing care, has hit on a phrase which has become a catchword with his men. "The thing," he will tell you, "is right." In 1903 I resigned the secretaryship, and was succeeded by Mr. Mansfield Hunter, whose term of office will always be famous in history, whatever the future may have in store, seeing that he organised the society's first American tour. The members of his party have never had full justice done to their achievements. At the time, little was known over here of the quality of American golf, and insular arrogance led us to assume that the men who were being beaten so regularly were mostly four-shot players. Since then we have got a line to the truth through Mr. Travis, Mr. Byers and other welcome visitors, and know that only a team of our very best could hope to equal the record of the pioneers. The tour took place in August and the early part of September, when the climate is very trying to strangers; the matches were played at intervals short of time but long of space; the members of the party would have been unable to go to bed at reasonable hours even if the hospitality and charm of their new friends had not robbed them of all desire to do so. Yet they only lost one match, and that was their final fixture when they met All America. Even then they seemed to have victory in their grasp at lunchtime, but it slipped from them afterwards, partly, it may be, because they were a bit overdone, but mainly because of a great display of dogged fighting by the American champions. Nine a side played, and the scores were level with one match to finish. This match was ultimately decided by a fooling competition at an extra hole; finally the American player pulled himself together and holed a putt to give his side the victory. That putt must be one of the best shots ever struck, if the circumstances be taken into consideration. The social side of the tour was not the least important. The leaders of the visiting party are men with a genius for promoting an *entente cordiale*, and they met on the other side Mr. G. H. Windeler, Mr. Maturin Ballon, Mr. Sam Huebner and other kindred spirits. Again the thing was right! The society has also toured with varying success and invariable pleasure in Scotland and Ireland, and no doubt hopes to repeat its visits. The least satisfactory thing in its history is that only three members have availed themselves of the privilege, granted them by the rules, of arranging matches after obtaining permission from the secretary. A little private enterprise would result in the spending of many happy days on various courses. It remains to add that members of the society may generally be recognised as such by their ties, of which the colours are composed of the two blues on the green, a combination meant to be onomatopœic.

APPOINTMENT OF THE GREEN COMMITTEE.

A CORRESPONDENT signing himself "Crowborough" writes to COUNTRY LIFE of January 12th, expressing disagreement with my views, stated in a previous number of the paper, that it was much better that the Green Committee of a golf club should be appointed direct by the body of the members in general meeting than that it should be a mere sub-committee of the general committee. I am not quite clear whether the signature is that of a Lord Crowborough—there are so many distinguished men receiving new peerages, and I have not the New Year's Peerage at hand—or whether it is a pseudonym. An excellent rule, which ought not to be departed from, is to

take no notice of anonymous or pseudonymous criticism, because so much of the value of criticism depends on the experience of the critic, and without the name we have no clue to this. In case, however, the former alternative with regard to the signature be correct, and it should seem discourteous to take no notice of these comments, I can only say that I retain my former opinion—to reiterate the reasons would be only wearisome—and as for the reasons of Lord Crowborough for preferring that the Green Committee should be a sub-committee, they seem to be based on two tacit assumptions, neither of which appears quite necessary, first, that the Green Committee's spending power should be limited only by the club's bank balance and credit; and secondly, that a working majority of such a committee should be absolute fools. The second assumption is to be granted far more readily than the first, which really implies the further and larger assumption that a working majority of the general members must be in the same category as the Green Committee. Were it not so, it is hardly to be supposed that they would delegate to the committee unlimited spending power. Neither is it in any way clear what greater guarantee we have of the wisdom of a general committee than of a Green Committee, which, again, is an assumption which Lord Crowborough appears to make. It does not appear from his letter that he speaks with any first-hand experience of both systems; but very possibly he has such experience in plenty, although the fact is not stated. In any case, I am afraid that what he has written has not affected my former view. I am very confident, also, that what I write will not affect his.

THE FORTHCOMING TOURNAMENT AT CANNES.

Without doubt the Grand Duke Michael of Russia is the most liberal of all patrons of the professional golfer. He is now organising, for the end of February, a professional tournament on the links at Cannes, at which, as it seems, every leading player on this side of the Atlantic is to take part. Already it is reported that the two Vardons, Braid, Taylor, Herd, Jack White, Sayers, Rowland Jones, Edward Ray and Massey have accepted the invitation. Without any other addition this is a fine show of golfing talent good enough to make a championship. At least the odds are considerable that this year's champion will be of this noble company.

BIARRITZ PROFESSIONALS.

It is interesting to note that in a recent match at Biarritz one of the local professionals, Jean Grassiet, has beaten Arthur Grant, who learned his game at North Berwick, and is on a visit to Biarritz, by no less than five holes. Of course the chief proof of the capacity of the French of that district for golf is shown by Arnaud Massey. Massey now holds the championship of France, and is so fine a player that with the exception of Braid, Taylor, Vardon and possibly Herd, very few people would care to back any man against him, and even in a match with one of these the odds against him would be light. Grant, whom Grassiet beat, qualified to play in the final of the *News of the World* Tournament last year, and Grassiet himself was second only to Massey in a thirty-six-hole scoring competition of the professionals in France lately. The truth is that, although the most partial verdict could not pronounce the Biarritz course to be a really good one, it demands great accuracy of driving and approaching if a man is to do at all well on it, and is thus a severe school for the golfer. It is justified by the success of such pupils as Massey and Grassiet. The latter, as well as the former, it is to be hoped, will be at Cannes competing in the Grand Duke Michael's tournament. Calloway, the resident professional at Cannes, has been in fine form lately, and has holed the course in 69; he should give a good account of himself among the great men.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

GOLF AND THE WEARING OF GLASSES.

DEFECTIVE eyesight must always be a barrier to the complete enjoyment of any athletic game. It has the disadvantage, moreover, of acting as a handicap to the natural or acquired skill of any player, for unless one can see clearly, so as to arrange objects in their natural focus of relative distance, no skilled aptitude in the use of the *arma campestris* of a game will make good the defect of the eye. Science with its beneficent palliatives, however, has come to the aid of us all; and to the golfer, the cricketer and the tennis player, lo! the wearing of glasses has enabled each in his own pastime to realise that the vision of dreams is the resemblance of the actual play. Nor does it seem to be any detriment to the game of the golfer, at any rate, that he wears spectacles or glasses. The golfer who does so has proved over and over again that, be the weather stormy or calm, wet or dry, he is the equal match of him who glories in the fitness of still being enabled to trust his golfing fortunes to the unaided eye. There was a time, perhaps not very long ago, when an ill-defined opinion seemed to prevail that the wearer of spectacles on the golf green was, if not actually out of place, at least indicative of a certain inferiority of playing form. But that prejudice soon shared the fate of other old-fashioned prejudices equally ill-founded when it was seen how quickly the front rank of our amateur players was recruited by scratch and plus players whose glances beamed out of wide-rimmed gold spectacles with a bright, tolerant philanthropy upon the ancient race of players who stood somewhat amazed at their speedy and consistent golfing success. Indeed, in 1891 and 1892 Oxford University had in each of these years three of the best players in the team wearing glasses; and though the captious critic might be inclined to say that this fact accounts for the beating of Oxford by Cambridge in those years by 11 and 12 holes respectively, the juster explanation can be found in the fact that University teams have always been unequal in calibre, and that heavier beatings are recorded on one side and the other when there were no wearers of spectacles among the players.

The eye is such a delicate piece of mechanism that every prudent golfer would, perhaps, do well to give it a little heed when his game becomes a little disjointed, when he searches in vain among the technicalities of the stance, grip and swing for a remedy, and when he finds that he now scuffs the ball off the tee where formerly he hit a clean shot. Every subtle influence in health and illness affects the power and the clearness of the eye, and quite lately, as part of the aftermath of recent influenza, some golfers who wear glasses have been heard to complain that they can no longer see the ball so well, neither can they follow it to the drop in its flight. Some change has occurred in the eye during the attack of influenza which has thrown out of gear the harmonious focus between the eye and the glass, with the result that the ball either appears to be dimmer than of yore, or apparently further away from the player when he takes up his position to address it. This failure of adjustment between the eye and the hand will readily explain an unaccountable variation in play, as it will equally account for the peevish mortification of feeling at being always beaten in matches, and the heroic declaration, "I must get a new pair of glasses." This resolve to provide a new pair of spectacles raises the question as to the most suitable form of glasses which the golfer should wear. Occasionally one sees on the links a player who is content to play his game in the pince-nez which he uses for the ordinary purposes of reading and writing at home and elsewhere. When such a player is met with in the course of a match tournament, the expression of inward wonder at the admirable game played under such handicapping conditions is akin to the feeling which is proverbially aroused when an old dog is seen learning a new trick—a feeling of astonishment, not so much that the thing is so well done, but that it is done at all. You will see the pince-nez being adjusted for every shot, being pressed deeper and deeper into the cartilage of the nose, threatening to fall off with the swaying of the body, and apparently in danger of being driven by the club into smithereens instead of the ball. Clearly the conviction is gathered from such an experience that pince-nez are wholly unsuitable for the golfer. His glasses should be steady, and as rigidly fixed in front of the eye as modern mechanical resources know how to achieve that end. The ordinary almond-shaped spectacle, moreover, is too narrow, for if an attempt is made to swing at a ball with such glasses the eye has always the oppressive sense of seeing the rim like the top bar of a gate. The range of vision must, therefore, be clear, and for that purpose the wide, round shooting glasses, firmly fixed behind the ear, are the best. If the focus is adjusted with delicate scientific accuracy as between the cornea of the eye and the glass, experience has already proved that the golfer who wears glasses plays an even more perfect game than his partner who disdains to lean upon such a crutch, but, maybe, needs its help quite as much.

The point upon which modern science has not yet spoken the last word is in helping the golfer to overcome the drawback of misty and wet weather. It is here where the wearer of glasses is handicapped. Moisture is attracted to the glass like a rusty nail to a magnet; and though laryngoscopic surgery has placed at the disposal of the wearer of glasses the useful chemical substance known as "lamin," its use in rubbing the outer and inner surfaces of the lens does not altogether get rid of a distracting dimness in judging distances and otherwise seeing the ball clearly in misty and wet weather. But where the wearer of glasses does undoubtedly score an advantage over the normally imperfect golfing eye is in the waning light of a summer evening or the rapidly falling darkness of a sombre winter afternoon. To the unaided eye, with the cornea of one or the other eye rapidly flattening through the creeping on of years, it is never easy to tell exactly the distance of the bunker that looms in gaunt obscurity as guard over the putting green. The gloaming mystifies distance, and the green is either beyond the reach of your selected club or is much nearer to you than was expected. The wearer of glasses is better equipped to judge his distances correctly in such a deceptive light, and in the soft hour of the gathering twilight he usually wins the holes from you. Another advantage which the wearer of glasses has over the unprotected eye is when the wind blows strong and cold. The wind flicks the cheek and the eye as if with a whip of thongs, causing the eyes to water copiously and to distort the position as well as the form of the ball. Even the wearer of the monocle seems here to gain an advantage. It was a characteristic attitude of Mr. "Andy" Stuart, a famous amateur in his day, to walk up to his ball and place the monocle in his eye to gauge the distance of the shot, and others find the use of the eye-glass equally serviceable in making distances. No one, as far as I know, has seen a leading professional player wearing glasses. Good eyesight is indispensable to their success as players, and yet when Braid, Taylor, Vardon and Herd had their eyes tested in Edinburgh at one of the championship gatherings a year or two ago, of the four Herd's eyesight was declared alone to be normally sound. If any of the four leading professionals should unhappily find his old skill slipping away from him now and again, might it not be reasonable to hint that in brooding over suggested remedies for

the recovery of the old form, an inevitable change in the eyesight should be met by burying the weak prejudice against the wearing of glasses?
A. J. ROBERTSON.

THE NEW "EDINBURGH."

THE number of the *Edinburgh Review* just issued is of a very learned and solid character. Probably readers of this paper will turn first to the article, "The Italian Garden." The following passage might have been written to describe certain illustrations that from time to time appear in our own pages: "In the illuminations of the 'Romaunt of the Rose' (Harleian MS.), the garden is laid out with treillage and grass plot, has an orange tree surrounded by a fence and a fountain throwing out jets of water, which fall into a basin, and beside which sits the *châtelaine* with her lute or her embroidery. The turreted walls rise four-square, and a flight of steps ascends to the barred and guarded gate. In all essentials it resembles a garden which the writer has seen laid out on the battlements of a castle in the Austrian Tyrol, which has been carefully restored to what is believed to be its original character. Here, too, is a fountain, a shady trellis, a circular seat set round with roses, and, in contrast to the high and peaceful seclusion, you may gaze sheer down the walls to a rushing torrent far below, or look across the ravine to the mountain pass, up which long ago were wont to come danger or succour, hope or despair, to the garden-makers on the turrets." The following contrast drawn between the Italian and English gardens will be found interesting and suggestive: "Such being its place in life, it is scarcely necessary to say that the last thing a garden in Italy was intended to be was a place for the display of fruit and flowers. Roses and some few flowers do, indeed, grow in profusion and form, in some sort, the tapestry of the walls over which they run riot, without receiving or needing attention; but what the Italians loved, what they still love, where they have not taken up modern fashions, was and is an expanse of ordered foliage, varied by open, sunny spaces and a stately scheme of stonework, and the lemon trees and geraniums or carnations are disposed in pots as they might be in the galleries of the house. A vital difference between English and Italian gardens is produced by the English love of flowers; and, odd as it may seem, a wealth of flowers is one of the new elements that we have introduced into these gardens, with all the complications that arise from the necessity for protecting the roses from the wind, or letting in the sunshine on herbaceous borders." The first article in the number is called "The Age of Reason," and is really an essay on Mr. John Morley's philosophical books, especially those dealing with Voltaire, Rousseau, Burke, Diderot and the Encyclopædists. The essay on tradition in art is a reasonable vindication of the application of principle to art criticism. "The English Industrial Revolution of the Eighteenth Century" is a study in political economy. The writer makes a great point of the fact that the people of the time were blind to what was taking place. "Johnson, when he visited Birmingham and walked through Boulton's warehouse, saw nothing more than a shop full of interesting objects. He did not seem in the least to perceive that it was evidence of an industrial birth, and while Horace Walpole was merely chronicling the daily doings of fine gentlemen and ladies in London, this great movement was altering the very society of which he was the observer. The importance of it was nowhere less appreciated than in the West End of London, to which the tittle-tattle of clever diarists and letter writers has given such undue prominence. That society, no doubt, had its interesting and significant characteristics, but the future of England was being moulded not in St. James's Street, but among the factories of Lancashire and Warwickshire." There is a pleasant literary essay called "Insular Fiction." In it many stories which have won the approbation of the public receive a severe slating. The most serious of the political articles is that on the state of Russia. The conclusion of the writer is that things are not quite so bad as they appear to be. He seems to believe that it will take a long time to effect the change from autocracy to constitutional government. Probably a generation will elapse before the changes are completed. But still there is reason to hope that out of the turmoil of the moment there will grow a great and progressive Russia in the years to come. A very instructive paper is given on the first Earl of Durham and Colonial aspiration. This is a contribution that has a very distinct bearing on the questions of the hour. It is characterised by a bias in favour of Free Trade, but that is the sort of thing that readers of the *Review* are accustomed to expect. However, even those who are in favour of the policy enunciated by Mr. Chamberlain will find in this essay a very clear analysis of the motives that prompted Lord Durham in his famous Commission to the Dominion of Canada. The writer has evidently studied the question carefully from every possible point of view, and has tried as hard as he can to present it not only with lucidity, but impartiality.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MOCK SUNS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The phenomenon observed by Lady Theodora Guest in Dorsetshire was also plainly visible here. When first noticed about two o'clock three mock suns were to be seen, the one perpendicularly above the real sun being much the brightest, though it faded away some time before the two lateral ones. The day had been particularly fine and bright. In East Kent on October 11th, 1899—a bright frosty afternoon—I observed a remarkably fine example of this phenomenon. In addition to the inner arc, with its three well-marked suns, there was an upper and outer arc with faint indications of lateral suns, but becoming exceedingly bright and iridescent at the point where it approached the zenith.—B. H., Ottery St. Mary.

AN OLD EPITAPH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—With reference to old epitaphs occurring from time to time on various tombstones, I beg to say that I copied this week a similar one on a stone in the churchyard of Christ Church at Southport, which I here enclose:

"Life is like a winter day,
Some breakfast and away,
Others to dinner stay and are well fed,
The oldest man but sups and goes to bed."

—C. E. WHATTEY (MAJOR).

THATCHED COTTAGES ON TRESKO.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The accompanying photograph of some poor fisher cottages to be found on Tresco, the second largest of the Scilly Isles, is interesting as showing the manner in which all straw-thatched roofs are fastened down in those islands. Owing to the exposed position of the group, the Atlantic gales sweep across Scilly with great violence, and strong winds are of such frequent occurrence that trees grow only in sheltered spots, while the more delicate vegetation has to be protected by thick hedges of veronica from 6ft. to 8ft. high. For this reason the ordinary manner of neatly finishing and fastening down thatches, as done in England, would be insufficient, as the winds would soon blow them to pieces. After the thatch is laid the whole is covered with a rope network (the meshes of which are oblongs of about 12in. by 6in.), which is finally fastened down to wooden pegs driven well into the walls. The result is not as neat and pretty as are our own thatched cottages, since the protruding eaves soon get weather-beaten.—M. M. R.



ANIMALS IN SNOW-TIME.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Can you or any of the numerous readers of COUNTRY LIFE give me any information on the effect of snowstorms on animals and birds? Why I ask is that all Wednesday my tame tawny owl, who lives in the house (free, not in a cage), was very excited, hooting and flying about all day; also our two house cats romped up stairs and down till they made such a nuisance of themselves they were turned out of doors. During the same day large flocks of birds kept passing over my home all in the same direction, namely, from east to west. One flock of wild ducks was very high up. The other flocks consisted of plovers, starlings and all kinds of finches. Fieldfares and redwings have appeared in the neighbourhood; previously we have had very few about. I should very much like to know if any of your correspondents can throw any light on the subject.—FRANCES PITT, Bridgnorth.

[We refer our correspondent to a Country Note in this issue.—ED.]

THE BIRDS' CORNER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Anyone fortunate enough to have a garden at his disposal may obtain a great deal of pleasure by setting apart a corner specially for the birds that usually come there. Even a very small garden may have its birds' corner, which should be within sight of a sitting-room window, so that the feeding, drinking and bathing of the feathered community may be watched. Winter is the best season for making friends with the birds, but numbers will come for water in the summer, as they do for food in winter; therefore the bird-lover may all the year round enjoy the company of his feathered friends, if he takes the trouble to encourage their visits. If the garden is large enough a drinking and bathing place should be made by scooping out a shallow depression in the ground, about 1yd. across, and the sides should be made to slope gently down to, say, 6in. deep in the middle; the hollow should then be plastered with cement. Such a miniature

lake makes a splendid bath for birds if kept clean and full to the brim. If, however, space does not allow of so elaborate a bathing-place, birds will greatly appreciate and constantly frequent a shallow pan filled with clean water. Whatever form the bath takes the sides should slope gently, as many birds will not plunge straight into deep water to bathe; they like a decline down which they can hop or walk to the right depth. For food in the winter every scrap of waste from kitchen and table should be saved and put in the "corner." Starlings are very fond of picking bones, and the extreme caution with which a starling approaches a bone provided for its enjoyment is most amusing. As soon as the shyness in advancing to the attack has been overcome they engage in a lively fight, squealing round it all the time. The tit family greatly appreciate a lump of suet or half a coconut suspended from the lower branches of a tree. Blue tits are most engaging and lovable little birds, and it is really a pleasing sight to see four or five of them perched on a piece of suet weighing about ½lb. and suspended by a string, for they spin round and round in the wind quite unconcerned, enjoying the feast. The writer has seen a blue tit, hanging to and feeding on a piece of suet, pick up and eat crumbs that had fallen on its yellow breast. This little bird is peculiar for the neat and dainty way in which it takes its food, and never wastes a particle; a large lump of fat is in a short time reduced to a few shreds of skin if placed where the tits can get at it. Any luxury intended for them should be suspended by a string not less than 1ft. long, otherwise the ubiquitous sparrow prevents the tits from having a fair chance; but this precaution will safeguard the tit, for the sparrow is unable to reach food swinging freely at the end of a string. Dog biscuit that has been crushed and placed in a dish and had boiling water poured over it makes a fine meal for hungry blackbirds, thrushes, robins, hedge-sparrows, etc. When the biscuit is quite soft it should be scattered on the ground, to induce the birds to come freely and quickly to the feast. Care should be

taken not to place food or bath near any bush or other cover roomy enough to conceal a cat, as this animal soon gets to know where birds regularly resort, and lies in wait to pounce upon them. Besides being a source of pleasure and interest to those who tend it the birds' corner affords splendid opportunities for bird photography. If a box or hollow pedestal containing a platform on which a camera can be fixed be always kept near the food and water the birds get quite accustomed to it, and will pose in front of it for their portraits just as well when the photographic plate is in position as if it were not there ready and waiting to snap-shot them. The box or pedestal can be painted stone-colour, and a plant in a pot placed on the top. There must,

of course, be an opening of the requisite size in one side of the contrivance for the camera lens to look through. A long piece of rubber tubing from the pneumatically-worked shutter to where the operator is concealed completes the arrangements. Many different kinds of birds can be seen and studied quite easily in such a spot, and when in summer we hear in the open country the notes of the birds we first learned to know in the garden corner during the winter months it is like meeting an old friend.—I.

A CURIOUS STAG HORN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The horn of which a photograph is given in your issue of the 12th inst. is undoubtedly that of a Père David deer. It is a very fine specimen, probably the finest known.—M. BEDFORD.

THE DESTRUCTION OF QUEEN WASPS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I, also, have found a white perennial cornflower attractive to queen wasps, though not so as to render them seizable by hand. I use a light butterfly net. The blossoms of some of the better rhododendrons are even more attractive. My observation seems to show that a year when one sees most queens is not the year when nests are most numerous, and *vice versa*; the reason for this I have not discovered.—K. H. T., County Donegal.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In answer to "N. G. H." in your issue of January 5th I wish to say that it is the perennial cornflower, cream colour, called, I believe, *Centaurea montana*, that I find so good for attracting the queen wasps.—ADA WILSON.

BIG TREES IN BRITAIN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In reply to "J. N.'s" enquiry I may say that the tree he mentions is not nearly so tall as many which I have measured in various parts of Great Britain. It is not easy to measure the height of some trees with accuracy,



PIGEON TRAP.

when they stand on sloping or uneven ground, when they lean more or less to one side, or when they have round tops which conceal the tallest branches from the point at which the base-line of the triangle is taken. But after having measured some thousands with the best instrument I know of, at over 300 different places, I believe that among conifers the tallest trees we have are the spruce and silver fir, both of which in rare instances exceed 140ft. The Douglas fir seems likely in certain sheltered places to exceed this height, but has not as yet had time to do so. Of deciduous trees the tallest are ash, elm—both wych and English—lime and poplar, all of which attain above 130ft., while the oak in two or three cases may reach as much. All these measurements will be found in the work which I am now publishing with Dr. Henry's assistance. The returns made to the Conifer Conference are now quite out of date, and were not all accurate when published. With regard to the trees at Colesborne, which "J. N." mentions, only one, a larch, exceeds 120ft., but much taller larches have been grown in England, though I know of none now standing. The largest trees as regards bulk are oak, beech and elm, and, though the exact cubic contents cannot be certainly known when the trees are standing, these may attain from 1,500 to 2,000 cubic feet in very favourable soils, and even larger trees are recorded as having existed in former times.—H. J. ELWES, Colesborne, Gloucestershire.

FIELD NAMES.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—The correspondence *re* field names is of great interest to me, as I have long taken note of odd and recondite names of the sort. I am acquainted with the names of hundreds of fields and meadows in Norfolk, Suffolk and Sussex, many of which it is hard to derive; but one of which it has puzzled me to guess either derivation or meaning is that of a long strip of meadow-land in Suffolk that is well known locally as "The Spong," the *o* pronounced short, as in long, etc. Can any reader help me to the meaning or derivation of it?—G. ASHBURNHAM.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Your correspondent "R. B." in COUNTRY LIFE of January 12th, asks for the derivation of "Cheffalongs," the name of a meadow in Dorset. I believe "falongs" to be "furlongs," and the "Che" may be the remains of the word cherry, and Cheffalongs originally "Cherry-furlongs," once perhaps a cherry orchard. I know a "Cherry-furlong" in a village in another county which is always pronounced by the natives "Cherryfurlong," making it one word, with the accent on the last syllable, and it is easy to see from this how the "r" in furlong after a time is dropped and the word becomes "fulong," or "falong." In the same village is a small orchard known as "Bizzom" orchard, having been church property and the tenant in old days paying rent in the form of "besoms" or brooms to sweep the church.—E. G. OSBORNE.

ORNAMENTAL WATER-FOWL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The number of amateurs who find pleasure in keeping collections of beautiful swimming birds has greatly increased within the last fifteen or twenty years, and I venture to beg for a little space in your columns to ask amateurs of water-fowl to kindly communicate with me respecting the acclimatisation of the rarer varieties of geese and ducks. Among these I would mention Ruppell's spurwing goose (*Plectropterus RaepPELLI*), Middendorff's goose (*Anser Middendorffii*), Caffin's snow goose (*Anser albatrus*), the emperor goose (*Anser canagicus*), the lesser white-fronted goose (*Anser erythropus*), as also the rarer bernicles, whistling ducks and sheldrakes. I am especially anxious to ascertain whether the great Australian sheldrake (*Tadorna tadornoides*), the radjah (*Tadorna radjah*) and the white-fronted sheldrake (*Tadorna cana*) have come into the hands of any amateur—I believe that only one specimen of the latter has as yet been possessed by the Zoological Society? I must not occupy your space by giving the names of those respecting which I am anxious for information, but would venture to explain

that I am engaged on the revision of my manual, "Ornamental Water-fowl," first published in 1888, and am most anxious to bring it up-to-date. I shall be exceedingly grateful for any notes which your readers may vouchsafe me in the matter.—ROSE E. HUBBARD, Winslow, Bucks.

TRAPPING THE WOOD-PIGEON.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Few birds save the starling have increased at such a rapid rate of late years as the ring-dove or wood-pigeon, and this is generally attributed to the great amount of country which at the present day is kept for game-preserving, thereby ensuring the woods and small plantations where these birds love to carry out their domestic affairs being free not only from molestation at the hands of human beings, but also from winged and four-footed foes. In addition, moreover, to our home-bred birds, vast quantities of ring-doves from abroad visit our islands during the winter months. These strangers are readily distinguishable from our fine, handsome indigenous bird in that they are smaller in size, much less brilliantly coloured, and the ring round the neck, from which this species takes its popular name, is not so well defined or so bright. In winter great flocks collect in the turnip-fields to feed on the leaves, and I have shot them with their crops absolutely crammed with this particular food, which gives them a decidedly strong and unpleasant flavour. In the early autumn the young birds are excellent eating, but during the winter the only plan is to make them into soup, "stoggie broth," as it is called, a well-known dish in the North Country, stoggie being the local name by which this bird is generally known. The wood-pigeons are often blamed for billing into the turnips themselves, but, from my experience, wrongly so. It is the rooks that do this, for the bill of the pigeon is too weak for this work in a general way; still, when hard put to it to find food in severe weather there is no doubt they will pick up the remnants scattered on the ground by the rooks. These pigeons do a lot of harm in the spring to clover, young corn and peas when they are too numerous. I have taken all kinds of seeds and leaves from their crops, such as acorns, seed-vessels of the chickweed and pieces of oak leaves covered with the gall caused by the insect *Dryophanta divisa*. In some seasons these birds are much affected by a tuberculous disease which affects the legs, head and large primary flight feathers, often rendering them quite incapable of flight, and at such times I have

picked up many of them in a very poor state. In some parts during the winter great numbers are trapped by the use of the simple apparatus shown in the photographs, viz., a net stretched on a framework of wood, one side of this framework resting on the ground, and the other propped up by a couple of light poles at either end. These poles rest on a ledge of smooth wood driven into the ground and on the same level with it, and to the bottom of each pole is attached a light strong cord, both of which run along the ground to the hut composed of leaves, branches and straw some thirty or forty yards away, in which the trapper is concealed. These frameworks are generally best placed in a wood or plantation close to one of the racks on which corn is placed for the pheasants as shown in another of the photographs, and when not in use they are left set with corn scattered underneath so as to get the birds used to

them and in the habit of feeding regularly beneath them. When it is desired to work them, an extra supply of corn, tares, peas, etc., is placed underneath, and the trapper hides himself in the hut, holding the two cords in his hands. As soon as there is a sufficient quantity of pigeons feeding underneath he gives a sharp jerk to the cords, the poles fly apart, the netted framework falls down, and the birds are captured. Naturally, being set in the pheasant coverts, the pheasants themselves often feed beneath the nets, and later on when it is desired to catch up both cocks and hens for breeding purposes, they come in very usefully, for the birds are so used to them that they have no fear of going beneath them. It is as well to sprinkle leaves, grass, etc., over the running cords, as the birds are very sharp-sighted, and though some people use wire-netting, fine tanned thread net is the best.—OXLEY GRABHAM.



THE TRAPPER'S HUT.



SET CLOSE TO A CORN RACK.